

healthy kids, happy families

Parents

***HELP
YOUR
CHILD
MAKE
FRIENDS**

**20
KIDS-MENU
MEALS
YOU CAN FEEL
GOOD ABOUT**

**↓
DUMP YOUR
DEBT!
3 FAMILIES
SHARE HOW
THEY DID IT**

**↓
NEW-MOM'S
NURSING GUIDE
TONS OF TIPS
YOU HAVEN'T HEARD**

**WIN
THE POWER
STRUGGLE WITH
YOUR CHILD**

**↓
FIND THE
RIGHT PET FOR
YOUR FAMILY**



Max Wolfe, age 5,
and The Biscuit, his
French bulldog

woof!

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m

contents



FUN

27 **Cabin-Fever Craft**

You knead this play-dough recipe.

28 **Toy Box**

Big softies

32 **Snack Mom**

Veggie roll-ups

34 **Make It**

Friends on the farm

36 **Pleeease Mommy, Can I Have One?**

Find the right pet for your family.



KIDS

51 **The Lying Game**

Why it's important to tell her the whole truth

52 **Health News**

Risks of antibacterial soaps, a new kind of P.E., soothing anxious kids, and more

60 **That Queasy Feeling**

The science behind motion sickness and what you can do to help

in every issue

mom to mom **10**
meet our advisors **12**
parents to parents **15**
baby bloopers **48**
resources **159**
parents last laugh **160**

march.

66 **8 Reasons Your Child Is Alive Today**

Wacky inventions and revelations that changed kids' health forever

68 **Secrets for Breastfeeding Success**

Expert tips for nursing nirvana

76 **Playdates Without Drama**

How to help your child build solid friendships

82 **Great Plates**

Parents picks America's 20 best kids-menu dishes.

88 **Making Math Fun**

Numbers games and activities



YOU

99 **Pretty in Pastel**

The right shadow for your eyes

100 **Mom's Most Wanted**

Crayons for grown-ups

104 **Hold On to Fabulous Hair**

Getting the body back



99



36

108 **"I Don't Let Things Get Me Down."**

One diagnosis, two kids, and how this mom makes it work

114 **If You Ask Me...**

Un-friend your ex, confront a hand-smacker, and more

118 **Demoting My Kid to Middle Manager**

The hilarious tale of a preschooler's power trip



HOME

125 **The Great Cover-Up**

A trick for camouflaging clutter

126 **Solutions**

Baby-monitor picks, washing "dry-clean only"s, and more

128 **5 Easy Meals**

Your weekday-dinner planner

134 **Mom's Money Clinic**

"We dumped our debt!"

142 **It Worked for Me!**

Readers' home-life hacks



AGES+STAGES

146 **Pregnancy**

Feel happy with a boy or a girl.

148 **Baby**

Mesmerizing activities for you and your infant

150 **Toddler**

Create a reliable routine.

152 **Preschooler**

How to handle your little guy's constant haggling

155 **School-Age**

Encourage his sense of humor.

156 **Big Kid**

Teach your kid to tell time.



RECIPES AT A GLANCE

32 **Veggie Roll-Ups**

128 **Scallop Pasta**

130 **Middle Eastern Meatballs**

130 **Drumsticks With Roasted Grapes**

132 **Ham and Beans**

132 **Mini Beef Burgers**



28

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AGE-BY-AGE GUIDE

specific advice as your child grows



PREGNANCY & BABY

- 52 **A Fresh Idea**
- 54 **Should You Worry? Research Shows Moms-to-Be May Need to Avoid Some Antibacterial Soaps**
- 56 **Medicine-Cabinet Must-Have**
- 66 **8 Reasons Your Child Is Alive Today**
- 68 **Secrets for Breastfeeding Success**
- 146 **Gender-Reveal Blues**
- 148 **First Fascinations**



TODDLER

- 56 **Medicine-Cabinet Must-Have**
- 58 **Soothing Anxious Kids**
- 58 **Potty-Training News**
- 60 **That Queasy Feeling**
- 66 **8 Reasons Your Child Is Alive Today**
- 68 **Secrets for Breastfeeding Success**
- 88 **Making Math Fun**
- 150 **Setting a Schedule**



145



PRESCHOOLER

- 56 **Medicine-Cabinet Must-Have**
- 58 **Soothing Anxious Kids**
- 58 **Potty-Training News**
- 60 **That Queasy Feeling**
- 66 **8 Reasons Your Child Is Alive Today**
- 76 **Playdates Without Drama**
- 88 **Making Math Fun**
- 152 **Little Negotiators**



SCHOOL-AGE

- 52 **Lunch-Box Lesson**
- 56 **Bikes Instead of Desks?**

- 56 **Medicine-Cabinet Must-Have**
- 58 **Soothing Anxious Kids**
- 60 **That Queasy Feeling**
- 66 **8 Reasons Your Child Is Alive Today**
- 76 **Playdates Without Drama**
- 88 **Making Math Fun**
- 155 **Good Humor**



BIG KID

- 52 **Lunch-Box Lesson**
- 56 **Bikes Instead of Desks?**
- 56 **Medicine-Cabinet Must-Have**
- 58 **Soothing Anxious Kids**
- 60 **That Queasy Feeling**
- 66 **8 Reasons Your Child Is Alive Today**
- 76 **Playdates Without Drama**
- 156 **Clock Wise**



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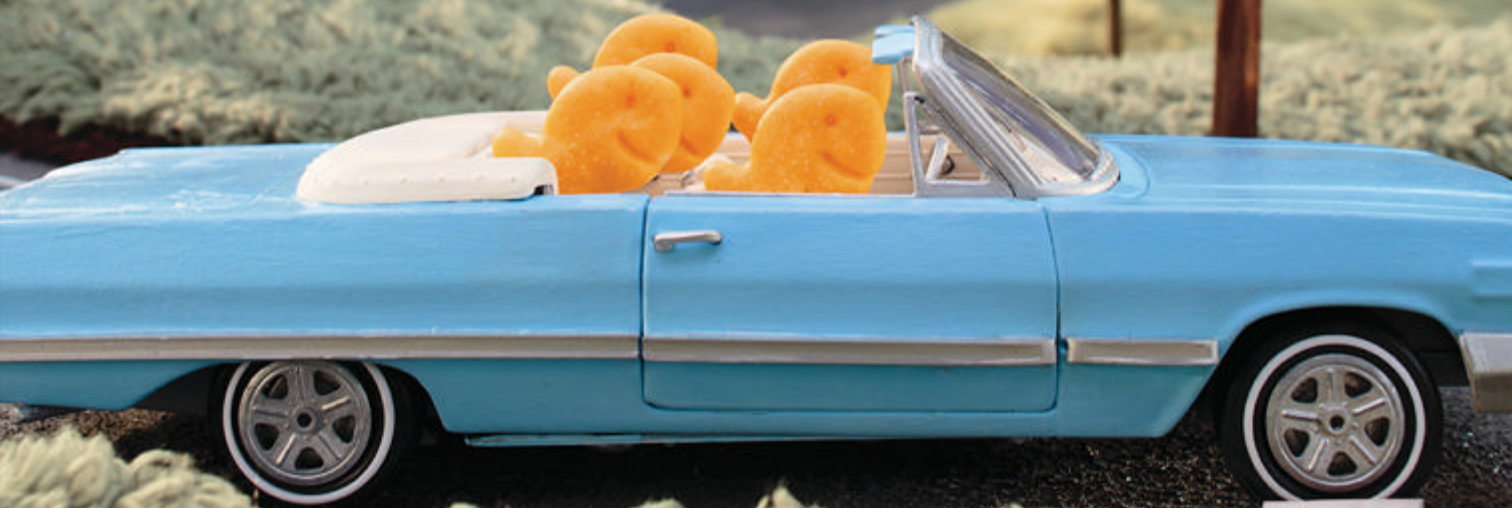
- 76 **HELP YOUR CHILD MAKE FRIENDS**
- 82 **KIDS-MENU MEALS YOU CAN FEEL GOOD ABOUT**
- 134 **DUMP YOUR PETT**
- 68 **NEW-MOM'S NURSING GUIDE TONS OF TIPS YOU HAVEN'T HEARD**
- 118 **WIN THE POWER STRUGGLE WITH YOUR CHILD**
- 36 **FIND THE PERFECT FOR YOUR FAMILY**

ON THE COVER

Max, 5 years, and his dog, The Biscuit. Photograph by John Huba. Wardrobe styling by Annie Caruso. Prop styling by Lisa Lee for Ray Brown Represents. Grooming by Sophie Haig for Bernstein & Andriulli. Child wrangling by Melanie Sawyer. On Max: Shirt, Little Eleven Paris. Hoodie, H&M. Pants, Ruff and Huddle.

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the *Parents*
team
answers

What's your best pet advice?



We adopted a beagle-spaniel mix from a local rescue group we found on PetFinder.com. My daughter, Madelyn, 8, fell in love with Blue right away from her photo—but we almost didn't get approved. So be careful not to promise a pup before it's a done deal.

Chandra Turner, Executive Editor



We got my daughter Julia a hamster, Butterscotch, for her ninth birthday. The pet store told us to avoid physical contact for the first few days. Hamsters are distrusting in a new environment, so the best way for her to warm up to us was to completely leave her alone.

Kara Corridan, Health Director



Don't wing it when it comes to training. Have a plan the whole family can participate in. My daughter, Rosa, helps out with our Havanese, Pepper. Even small kids can feed a dog or clip on the leash.

Jenna Helwig, Food Editor

animal instincts

FURRY (and scaly) friends abound in this issue, from the lovable and low-maintenance loveys on page 28 to the DIY farm friends in our Make It column (page 34). But the focal point is the group of much-loved pets with their fur-real young owners in our story “Pleeease, Mommy, Can I Have One?” on page 36. Pining for, planning for, choosing, owning, caring for, and even ultimately mourning a pet is a magical part of the experience of childhood and thus of parenthood. Our guide is designed to help you make the right decision about the animal that best suits your family.

For our family, that has meant fish, followed by a so-called “pocket pet” (in the form of Mr. Nibbles, our hamster, whom I found myself inordinately fond of, despite the fact that he tried to bolt at every opportunity and wasn't a cuddler much less a pocket occupant). Now our older son, Leo, is maintaining a menagerie in our basement: a growing collection of

reptiles and amphibians basking on heat mats and swimming in the artificial current. (Having a pet is also an exercise in financial management for child and parent alike.) I have become accustomed to accidentally reaching for a refrigerated container of mealworms when I am looking for my morning yogurt and have even attended a couple of reptile “fairs,” where snakes, lizards, and more sit about in plastic deli containers, waiting for a new home.

I have seen the pleasure that pets bring and marveled at how a child's sense of independence and responsibility can blossom when he has a creature dependent on him. The kids grow as they care for the pets—much the way we grow as we care for them.

Dana

Dana Points
dana@parents.com

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meet our advisors

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My 7-year-old still uses a booster seat in the car, but he's starting to protest because some of his friends no longer ride in one. What should I do?

Laws governing booster seats vary, but a child should be at least 4'9" tall and weigh at least 80 pounds to ride without a booster. Even if your child meets this guideline (and most 7-year-olds won't), give him this test to see if he's ready to switch: 1. Have him sit with his back and bottom against the back of the vehicle's seat. 2. Do his knees bend naturally at the edge of the seat? If not, he's too little. 3. If they do, buckle him up so the lap belt rests on his upper thighs or hips and the shoulder belt rests on the bony part of his shoulder. **He is ready to move only if both parts of the belt fit correctly;** if the shoulder belt rests against his neck or the lap belt is on his stomach, keep him in the booster. Find more car-safety info at safekids.org. —**DR. MARTIN EICHELBERGER**

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parents ^{seen, heard, shared} 2 parents

PULSE

➔ 3 Reasons Moms Love *Fifty Shades of Grey*

When E. L. James's novel hit stores in 2012, we neglected piles of laundry to binge-read. We'll crowd theaters come February 13, but make no mistake, our obsession has little to do with that red room, those silver ties, or being dominated.

1. It's Our Turn Now that parenting has become a verb, we spend our days managing schedules, making dinner, and focusing on everyone but ourselves. Maybe we just want someone else to make the decisions for once.

2. We're "The One" Christian didn't let his guard down and show his vulnerable side just because he met some supermodel (we're looking at you, Tom Brady and Adam Levine). He fell hard for a normal girl just like us.

3. We Got the Power Christian is a guilty pleasure who's as easy to pick up and put down as the book he lives in. After a full day of "Mommy, Mommy, Mommy," it's nice to have a relationship on our terms. While we wouldn't trade the ones we have in real life for even a night in Christian's helicopter (or bedroom), a girl can dream, right? —Sabrina James



27 WORDS FROM ...

Let Me Start By Saying
Glitter: Substance that causes an equal yet opposite reaction in small children versus their parents. If you need me, I'll be picking it off the cat. AGAIN.

"Glitter, Defined," posted on LetMeStartBySayingBlog.com

IT'S COME TO THIS [A new study finds that activity in the reward centers of the brain increases when moms look at pictures of](#) ➔

PULSE

Throwback Parenting: The '90s vs. Now

Justin Timberlake isn't the only one who's transformed dramatically since the '90s. Parenting has grown up quite a bit too. A LOL look at parenting trends now versus then. —SJ

1990s

➔ It was literally the Joneses next door.



➕ Plastic character glasses from fast-food joints

➔ The whole family enjoys *Full House* and *America's Funniest Home Videos*.



➔ Tiny glass jars



➔ Put the baby in a high chair, a playpen, or a walker (egad!).

➔ The 13-year-old girl in your neighborhood



KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES

CUPS

FAMILY TV

BABY FOOD

BABY PROOFING

THE BABYSITTER

2015

➔ We keep up with the Kardashians.



➕ BPA-free spill-proof sippy cups



➔ Adults binge-watch *Game of Thrones* on HBO GO while kids are glued to *Phineas and Ferb*.



➔ Convenient squeeze pouches (organic, of course)



➔ Free-roaming babes are monitored 24/7 with high-tech video feeds.



➔ A reference- and background-checked child-care professional with a master's in childhood education



either their children—or their dogs. | Michigan cop buys a down-on-her-luck mom a booster seat with his own money ➔



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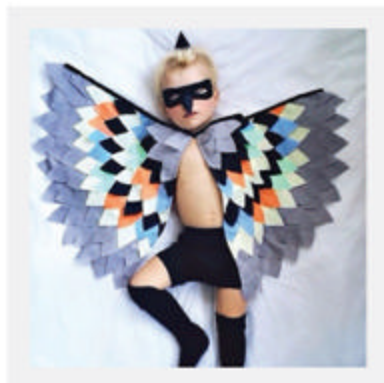
↑ DONALD ROBERTSON
@donalddrawbertson

Each day he whips up colorful pop art and posts pictures of his five children (especially twins Charlie and Henry, above) before heading off to his job as a creative director at Estée Lauder.



↑ HARLOW WILES @insta2yearold

Get up close and personal with the food, toys, shoes, and views experienced by 2-year-old Harlow (with the help of her mom, Ilana Wiles, the blogger behind *Mommy Shorts*). Expect hilarious toddler-inspired captions.



↑ KATE OLIVER @kateoliver

It's hard to believe, but Oliver dresses up her three sons in quirky costumes while they snooze. She uses materials from around the house to make props like wings for her heavy sleepers, then posts the adorable images to her feed with the tag #rockthatnap.



↑ HEATHER SPOHR @mamaspohr

After losing her oldest daughter to complications from a premature birth in 2009, Spohr launched Friends of Maddie to support families with critically ill babies. Now she celebrates her 5-year-old daughter and 1-year-old son's milestones through pictures.

MOM MUST-READ

by **Kristen Kemp**
book-club inspiration



Universal truth: No parent wants to raise a spoiled-rotten child. So *New York Times* money writer Ron Lieber put together this manifesto to rescue us all. His book ***The Opposite of Spoiled: Raising Kids Who Are Grounded, Generous and Smart About Money*** breaks down how to deal with common kid queries such as: “Are we rich?” (“Yes. Richness isn’t just money”) and “Why does my BFF get the best Pokémon cards and I don’t?” (“In our house, you save up for your heart’s desires”). Unspoiled kids will learn to give, save, and spend, and they should have the freedom to make mistakes along the way. One of my favorite tips is to explain The Fun Ratio, the breakdown of the cost per hour of play with a toy. For example, a fourth teddy bear costs \$20, and your daughter will cuddle with it twice before forgetting about it (a cost of \$10 per hour). A deck of Uno cards is \$6, and she will play it at least 40 times (15 cents per hour). Lieber lays out money on the table in real and honest ways. Look no further than *The Opposite of Spoiled* for a book that will truly help you raise your kids to be thrifty and kind.



instead of issuing a ticket. | A 5-year-old British girl with autism has been dubbed “Mini Monet” after her paintings, which



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● parents to parents



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THE CONVERSATION

→ Mealtime Magic

Thank you for “Picky-Eater Rehab” [January 2015]. Just before he turned 2, my son Caleb basically gave up eating and chewing foods. We went to the Feeding Disorders Program at Cleveland Clinic Children’s Hospital for Rehabilitation and a lot of your tricks and tips are ones that we have learned. We’re doing something right! DARCY HERSHEY; SOLON, OH

→ Time Well Spent

In “Parents to Parents” [January 2015] you outline what parents can do [to stay engaged with their child] instead of stressing about school involvement. This painted a picture that you can only be either be a parent who hovers or a parent who makes cocoa —no balance. Call me crazy, but helping a kid figure out math is not hovering. It’s called parenting. ABBY CRAWFORD; ST. LOUIS, MO

→ Lasting Impression

My daughter Kimberly was on your March 2001 cover [below], pictured with a dog. As her birthday surprise, we bought that puppy and named him Lexington. Kimberly, now 16, and Lex grew up together and shared a special bond. Lex was diagnosed with cancer and recently passed away, but he lived a long, happy life and was a special member of our family. Thank you, *Parents*, for uniting Kim and Lex. The cover hangs in our home as a constant memory of a beautiful day. CINDY BASS; TINTON FALLS, NJ



There’s a sweet story behind this cover.

GET IN TOUCH! Send your comments and photos to writeus@parents.com. Include your daytime phone number, city, and state or province. You can also post on [facebook.com/parentsmagazine](https://www.facebook.com/parentsmagazine). Submission of your material constitutes permission for Meredith Corporation to allow its use in all media. Subscription questions? Visit us at [parents.com/magazine](https://www.parents.com/magazine).

she creates with the help of her therapy cat, sell for thousands of dollars. | A →

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JUST KIDDING!

by **Sarah Schmelling**
humorist-in-residence



PARENT BLOGS, RECEIVES NO NEGATIVE COMMENTS

CHANTILLY, VA – A mom surprised everyone last week when she posted something about parenting online and received only helpful responses.

“I’ve been looking for a new place to get my kids’ hair cut, so I thought I’d ask on a local parenting site,” explained Tess Bramfield, 35. “Of course I expected someone to say what’s wrong with me that I don’t cut my own kids’ hair.”

Instead, she received several good suggestions with a range of prices and location information. “It was amazing. No one insulted me or questioned my overall value as a mother,” she said. “Last year I wrote something on the PTA Listserv about cutting down on sweets for Valentine’s Day parties and another mom called me the ‘Candy Dictator.’”

“I’ve never heard of this happening before,” said Charlotte Tanner, 32, who writes a parenting blog. “I once posted an essay about my son’s love for his rocking horse and someone called me a #!\$!#!@#%! with a !\$#\$&@ for a @#%#%.”

Bramfield said this experience might make her bold enough to post about parenting again. “I could write how I feel about stay-at-home and working moms ...” Then she burst out laughing. “Kidding! My skin isn’t that thick. I’ll just try to sell our Pack ‘n Play on Craigslist.”



REGISTRY INSPIRATION

We know your pregnancy cravings and naptime noshes can be strange, but is custom Peanut Butter & Pickles ice cream the answer? eCreamery thinks so. Add crazy-flavor combos like “Craving Cure All” or “2 a.m. Feeding Fuel” to your registry, and prepare to splurge: \$60 for a half gallon; ecreamery.com

SCREEN-TIME FINDS



→ movies

The residents of Bikini Bottom are journeying to land to defeat Burger-Beard the Pirate in **The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge Out of Water**. Along the way, the gang gains crazy superhero powers. *Not yet rated; opens February 6*

Based on a true story from the 1980s, **McFarland, USA** focuses on a high-school cross-country coach as he transforms a team

of novice runners into championship contenders. *PG; opens February 20*

→ apps

Is your family prepared in case an emergency strikes? **Let’s Get Ready**, a Sesame Street app, provides checklists, tips, and resources for parents, along with activities to teach children safety in a nonthreatening way. *2 years+, free for iPad, iPhone, iPod touch, and Android*

→ video games

Yoshi’s Woolly World is so cute and colorful, you may want to play along with your kid. Each level is made completely out of yarn and cloth so you can unravel the walls or build wool platforms to explore. *6 years+, \$60 for Wii U*

network of fertility clinics hosts egg-freezing parties for women who want to learn about preserving their parenthood option.

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cabin-fever craft

When the weather outside is frightful, keep the kids busy with this recipe for colored play dough.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 1 cup all-purpose flour**
- 1 cup warm water**
- 2 Tbs. salt**
- 2 Tbs. cream of tartar**
- 2 Tbs. cooking oil**
- 1 3-oz. packet Jell-O gelatin**

MAKE IT

- 1.** Whisk all the ingredients together in a small saucepan.
- 2.** Cook over medium heat, stirring continuously, until the dough thickens and forms a ball.
- 3.** Let cool for 30 minutes.
- 4.** Repeat with various gelatin flavors to create a fun mix of colors for your child to play with.



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DIG A *Little* DEEPER

Feeding Future Generations

VOL.2 SUSTAINABILITY

Our planet is our most precious natural resource. And the number of people who inhabit it is expected to rise significantly over the next fifty years. Since a growing population means growing demand for natural resources, it's time to look ahead and discuss ways to make a balanced meal more accessible for all. Here are some of the innovative things being done to ensure the world will have enough nutritious food to eat not just *today*, but *tomorrow*.

Today's steps toward a better tomorrow:

1 A good harvest depends on many things, including the right conditions to grow. Our planet faces many challenges, from climate change to soil quality, and experts are working together to develop solutions to help farmers ensure better harvests, while using natural resources more efficiently.



2 Plants need water, so conserving this precious natural resource is a priority. Experts are tapping into ways to use water more efficiently in agriculture, such as utilizing sensors to measure moisture levels in soil and reduce runoff. This will enable the water supply to go further.

3 Would you believe satellite technology is also helping farmers grow crops more efficiently? Images taken from space provide farmers the data to be more precise about the amount of seeds, water and fertilizer they will need on every acre of farmland, to grow food more sustainably.



4 Ensuring soil health is also key: when soil is well-nourished, it provides nutrients that help plants thrive, absorbs rainwater for use during drier periods, and filters potential pollutants. Efforts are underway to improve soil health, with the goal of helping farmers have better harvests.

Food for thought:

842 MILLION

people in the world don't have enough food.



In order to feed our growing population, global food production will need to increase by

70% BEFORE 2050.

Over the next

50 YEARS,

farmers will need to produce more food than has been produced during all human history.



under wraps

Vegetables go down easily when they're stuffed in this sammie.

by CATHERINE McCORD

Veggie Roll-Ups

Active Time 10 minutes

Total Time 10 minutes

Makes 4 servings

INGREDIENTS

½ cup hummus or tahini

4 8-in. whole-wheat tortillas

1 medium carrot, peeled and grated

½ medium cucumber, seeded and grated

½ small red sweet pepper, thinly sliced

MAKE IT

1. Spread 2 Tbs. of hummus or tahini on each tortilla, making sure you cover the edge.
2. Sprinkle ¼ of the carrots, cucumbers, and sweet peppers along one edge of each tortilla.
3. Roll up tightly, slice in half diagonally, and serve.

NUTRITION PER SERVING

201 calories; 6g protein; 6g fat (1g sat. fat); 32g carbs; 5g fiber; 4g sugar; 2mg iron; 107mg calcium; 366mg sodium



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Check out recipes from weelicious.com for even more great ways to get your kid to eat veggies.



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what you'll need



scissors



cardboard egg carton



craft glue



paint & paintbrush



craft paper



chenille stems



pencil



googly eyes



1. Cut the carton into individual egg cups, and trim off any excess cardboard. To form the body for each critter, glue two egg cups together, with the open ends touching.



2. Once the glue has dried, paint the outside of the egg cups. Cut ears, beaks, and snouts out of craft paper and make the horns, tails, and feathers with chenille stems.



3. Wrap a chenille stem around a pencil to create a pig tail. Use scissors to poke slits in the cups for tail, horns, and feathers. Glue googly eyes, ears, and a beak or a snout to each egg cup.



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pleeease mommy, can I have one?

No matter what type of pet your kid wants, you're bound to have questions. Use our guide to make the right choice.

by **LESLIE GARISTO PFAFF**



Ryan Sweeney, 8, says of his St. Bernard, Hobson: "We make a great match. Just look at our hair!"

photographs by **JOHN HUBA**



I could
use a cricket
right now.

Stefan Stankovic, 5,
named his bearded dragon
Gagi after his grandfather.

DR. DOLITTLE has nothing on us. My daughter, Lily, was born into a family of four: two parents and two cats. When she turned 1, we got a couple of goldfish to round out the crew. But it wasn't long before our creature-crazed daughter added a hermit crab, a pair of little green anoles, a gecko, two tadpoles, which quickly morphed into two fat frogs, and a succession of snails. Repeat that cycle (twice), and you have an idea of the menagerie we call home.

The pets came bearing not just fur and scales and shiny shells, but gifts, teaching my daughter invaluable lessons in empathy, compassion, and responsibility. They also taught me a few lessons: I wasn't cut out for

feeding crickets to our reptiles. Cat allergies can pop up unexpectedly in a 7-year-old who's spent a lifetime around felines. And, perhaps most important, choosing the perfect pet involves more than a small voice entreating, "Can we keep it?"

While your kid's pleading and solemn oaths to care for a pet "every day, I promise!" may sway you, don't forget to factor in the needs of your family and prospective pet. "Whether it's a dog, a cat, or a 'pocket pet' like a guinea pig or a gerbil, an animal shouldn't be an impulse buy," says Jason Nicholas, B.Vet.Med, a veterinarian in Portland, Oregon, and founder of PreventiveVet.com, an informational resource site for pet

owners. You'll have to consider the age and maturity of your child, the pet's temperament and caretaking needs, and your budget, keeping in mind that even "free" pets require a lifetime of feeding and vet care. Plus, don't neglect to factor in how much time (and energy) you'll be devoting to your pet—since children under age 10 should never be given sole responsibility for the well-being of an animal. Use our guide to find the next member of your family.

➔ Big Dogs

There's a reason dogs have long been dubbed man's best friend. They play an active role in family life and thrive on human affection and interaction. However, pooches require at least 30 minutes of daily care for walking and feeding. As highly social animals, they aren't happy spending extended periods on their own; if you and your spouse work full-time outside the home, caring for Fido may be a no-go. Most breeds live between eight and 15 years and require three walks of at least ten minutes per day (longer, if your dog belongs to a herding or hunting breed), monthly toenail clipping, and regular brushing (especially if your pup is long-haired).

While caring for a dog is a big responsibility, even very young kids can help by refreshing water bowls, doling out food, or lending a hand with the occasional bath. Older kids can take a more active role in pet care by brushing and walking.

Many breeds, like collies, golden retrievers, and Portuguese water dogs, are especially good with young kids. Plus, bigger dogs are likely to adjust to kids' rough-and-tumble play—and many relish it. If your kid is active by nature, consider a high-energy breed that can tolerate roughhousing like an Airedale terrier or a Siberian husky. If your child is shy or even a little fearful, a calmer, gentler animal—like a bulldog, say, or a Clumber spaniel—is a better choice.



Sara Melton, 5, with her mixed-breed cat, Puffy, who responds to commands in both English and Japanese.

Sienna Luna, 8, named her pet guinea pig Mr. Belvedere (nicknamed "The Butler") because he often rearranges the items in his cage.





Leo Kennedy, 6, and his bearded dragon, Storm Jr.: "Mom is always like, 'Ew, get it away!' But I think reptiles are cool."

A shelter or rescue group can let your family interact with animals to make an educated choice. When Jacqueline Wilson, of Indianapolis, was looking for a dog for her daughter, Ella, she took her then 4-year-old to a shelter to "try on" potential pets. Much to Wilson's surprise, Ella fell in love with a kid-friendly pit bull. After learning more about the breed from experts at the shelter, Wilson felt confident it was a good match.

★ QUICK FACTS

Best breeds for kids Golden retrievers, Labrador retrievers, collies, standard poodles, Portuguese water dogs, and many mixed breeds
Typical annual cost of care \$900

➔ Small Dogs

For families who have space restrictions or want to travel often with their pets, smaller dogs, generally those under 20 pounds, may be a good choice. (Plus their teensy paws are super adorable!) Like bigger dogs, pint-size pups require daily walking, feeding, and grooming to stay healthy and happy—though their life span is often slightly longer than that of their larger counterparts (11 or 12 years, as opposed to about 8 for larger dogs). As with bigger dogs, younger kids can help by offering food and water and assisting with baths, while older ones can help with brushing and walking.



5 Questions to Ask Before Adopting a Shelter Pet

Natalie DiGiacomo, director of shelter services at The Humane Society of the United States, recommends you find out the following before you commit.

1 What is known about the animal's past? Its background can offer insight into the pet's health history and behavior.

2 What about the animal's personality? The shelter staff may have made observations about the animal's fears (e.g., loud noises) and play habits.

3 What services are included in the adoption fee? Many shelters include sterilization, vaccinations, microchip identification, and more.

4 Does the shelter offer follow-up care? Some do provide post-adoption services, like consultations from an on-staff veterinarian.

5 Can you recommend other local animal services, like training classes and grooming centers? Most shelters can provide referrals for trusted professionals in your area. Many also have information about local dog parks, pet-friendly rental housing, and more.

Find a shelter near you at theshelterpetproject.org.
 —Christina Jedra

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However, little dogs may not tolerate interactions with small children, who can be unintentionally rough. “Intuitively, many people think that small dogs are best for small children, but smaller dogs can be more anxious around kids and can react aggressively when they feel threatened,” says Dr. Nicholas.

★ QUICK FACTS

Best breeds for kids Maltese, pugs, Yorkshire terriers, miniature schnauzers, French bulldogs

Typical annual cost of care \$600

➔ Cats

Cats require less care than dogs do (and can tolerate more alone time), but they still need feeding, grooming, litter-changing, and regular affection for all of their so-called nine lives—in

reality, they generally live for 14 or more years. Children younger than 6 or 7 can pitch in by feeding and freshening the water bowl, while older ones should be able to brush or comb their cat. (If you’re pregnant, make sure another adult cleans the litter, since cat feces can transmit toxoplasmosis, a disease known to harm fetal development.) A plus: “Cats are less costly to own and maintain, and don’t require expensive training the way some dogs may—in fact, they train you for free,” jokes Jeffrey Levy, D.V.M., a New York City house-call vet.

Most vets don’t recommend giving a young child a kitten (or a puppy, for that matter), since they can be prone to nipping and scratching if mishandled. Plus, it’s hard to gauge

the temperament of an immature animal. (My family learned this the hard way after choosing a kitten for its “adorable” antics. Her adult quirks, like sinking her teeth into our bare feet, were less sweet.) However, an adult shelter cat “can be ideal for young kids,” says Gretchen Norton, D.V.M., a veterinarian in Silverthorne, Colorado. A good shelter, she says, “will not only check animals for medical problems but will also do behavioral analyses” to ensure your child and pet are a fit.

★ QUICK FACTS

Best breeds for kids Young adult (1 to 3 years) mixed-breed cats and short-haired cats, which are lower maintenance than longer-haired cats. “If your heart is set on a specific breed, first talk to a vet about potential health problems that may be associated,” says Dr. Norton.

Typical annual cost of care \$700

➔ Pocket Pets

If your family isn’t ready for a cat or a dog, consider a member of the rodent family or a rabbit (not a rodent, actually, but a lagomorph). They typically have a shorter life span (hamsters and gerbils generally live for three years, but rabbits, ferrets, and guinea pigs can live eight years or longer) and require less daily care than larger pets. However, some pocket pets are best suited for older kids. Ferrets, for example, will nip when young and are generally more care-intensive, and rabbits are known to kick if mishandled, which could potentially injure your child.

Of course, you’ll need to feed and freshen their water daily, in addition to cleaning the cage on a weekly basis. Older kids can help with the cleaning (make sure they wash their hands afterward), and younger kids can refill water bowls and offer their pet cut-up veggies daily.

Just as with dogs, smaller doesn’t necessarily mean more kid-friendly. “Hamsters tend to be nippy, and



Teddy Jasper, 3, affectionately calls his shih tzu, Ernie, his brother.

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Sienna Lynch, 8, says of her white bunny, Thumper: "I like always having someone to play with."

quick-moving kids can frighten them," notes Laurie Hess, D.V.M., an exotic-animal vet in Bedford Hills, New York. Guinea pigs, on the other hand, are both hardy and gentle. And if you can get over the negative connotations, a rat makes a great companion. "They're interactive, smart, and bond closely with their family," says Dr. Hess. Just remember that many pocket pets are nocturnal, so the squeak of a hamster wheel could keep your child up at night.

★ QUICK FACTS

Best types for kids Rats and guinea pigs for all ages; rabbits, chinchillas, and teddy-bear hamsters are ideal for older kids

Typical annual cost of care \$300 (for small mammals like hamsters), \$600 (guinea pigs), and \$700 (rabbits)

➔ Reptiles and Amphibians

While smaller pets like reptiles may look like a great low-maintenance alternative, they're hardly care-free. Reptiles, due to their cold-blooded nature, need a specific habitat in order to thrive, including a basking lamp and/or heating mat, and both reptiles and amphibians require a terrarium or other enclosure. Plus, many subsist on a diet of live food and require vitamin and mineral supplementations, says Dr. Nichols.

If you're considering a reptile, Nic Bugg, a breeder in Maryland, recommends the gentle bearded dragon for kids. "They have a calm personality—it's almost impossible to get bitten by one," he says. Other good picks include king and corn snakes and Kenyan sand boas (all of

which readily eat prepackaged frozen rodents—which may not sound all that appealing until you consider the alternative); leopard geckos; and Greek, Russian, or pancake tortoises (but watch out—their life span can rival that of humans!).

Reptiles and amphibians, though, can carry disease-causing salmonella bacteria, which is why the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warns against giving reptiles, or other potential carriers such as frogs and toads, to kids under the age of 5. (Although it's less likely, rodents, birds, dogs, and cats can also transmit salmonella.) You can reduce the risk of transmission by washing hands after handling animals, cleaning habitats outdoors, and keeping pets away from surfaces where you eat or prepare food. Kids can take on feeding duties, but cage cleaning should be left to grown-ups.

★ QUICK FACTS

Best types for kids Bearded dragon, king and corn snakes, leopard gecko
Typical annual cost of care \$400

➔ Don't Forget About ...

Fish The ultimate starter pet. Even young kids can help with daily feedings, as long as they don't overfeed them, says Jena Questen, D.V.M., CertAqV, an aquatics vet in Denver.

Bugs If your child is drawn to creepy-crawly critters, Texas-based insect enthusiast Stephen Panico recommends stick insects (they're vegetarian!) and Madagascar hissing cockroaches (easy, hardy, and happy to be handled).

Birds These creatures can require more intensive care than many other pets, explains Amber Andersen, D.V.M., a veterinarian in Los Angeles. If you're set on one, try parakeets and lovebirds, both of which are relatively docile.

MAYBE IT'S TIME TO BREAK UP

◁ With Your Current ▷

BIRTH CONTROL

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MORE THAN 99% EFFECTIVE PARAGARD®
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DID YOU KNOW BIRTH CONTROL CAN BE HIGHLY EFFECTIVE WITHOUT ANY HORMONES? PARAGARD® is the only IUD that's 100% hormone free and lasts up to 10 years. It can be placed during a routine office visit and removed at any time. There are no daily routines or refill hassles, just a simple monthly string check.

If you've tried other birth control methods that just aren't working for you, maybe it's time to talk to your healthcare provider about PARAGARD®.

Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), PARAGARD® may now be available to insured women without a co-pay or other out-of-pocket costs. Check with your insurance provider.

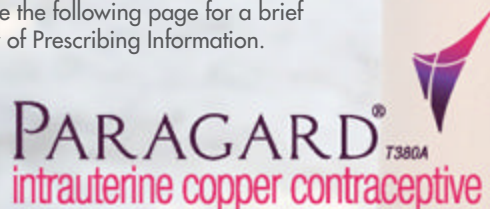
PARAGARD® is indicated for intrauterine contraception for up to 10 years.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

Do not use PARAGARD® if you have a pelvic infection, get infections easily or have certain cancers. Less than 1% of users get a serious infection called pelvic inflammatory disease. If you have persistent pelvic or stomach pain, or if PARAGARD® comes out, tell your healthcare provider. If it comes out, use back-up birth control. Occasionally, PARAGARD® may attach to or in rare cases may go through the uterine wall and may also cause other problems. In some cases, surgical removal may be necessary. Although uncommon, pregnancy while using PARAGARD® can be life threatening and may result in loss of pregnancy or fertility. Bleeding or spotting may increase at first but should decrease in 2 to 3 months. **PARAGARD® does not protect against HIV or STDs.**

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA at www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see the following page for a brief summary of Prescribing Information.



Ask your doctor if PARAGARD® is right for you.
Visit PARAGARD.com or call 1-877-PARAGARD (727-2427).

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Brief Summary (See package brochure for full prescribing information) Rx Only

ParaGard® T 380A Intrauterine Copper Contraceptive is used to prevent pregnancy. It does not protect against HIV infection (AIDS) and other sexually transmitted diseases.

What is ParaGard®?

ParaGard® (intrauterine copper contraceptive) is a copper-releasing device that is placed in your uterus to prevent pregnancy for up to 10 years. ParaGard® is made of white plastic in the shape of a “T.” Copper is wrapped around the stem and arms of the “T”. Two white threads are attached to the stem of the “T”. The threads are the only part of ParaGard® that you can feel when ParaGard® is in your uterus. ParaGard® and its components do not contain latex.

How long can I keep ParaGard® in place?

You can keep ParaGard® in your uterus for up to 10 years. After 10 years, you should have ParaGard® removed by your healthcare provider. If you wish and if it is still right for you, you may get a new ParaGard® during the same visit.

What if I change my mind and want to become pregnant?

Your healthcare provider can remove ParaGard® at any time. After discontinuation of ParaGard®, its contraceptive effect is reversed.

How does ParaGard® work?

Ideas about how ParaGard® works include preventing sperm from reaching the egg, preventing sperm from fertilizing the egg, and possibly preventing the egg from attaching (implanting) in the uterus. ParaGard® does not stop your ovaries from making an egg (ovulating) each month.

How well does ParaGard® work?

Fewer than 1 in 100 women become pregnant each year while using ParaGard®.

Who should not use ParaGard®?

You should not use ParaGard® if you: Might be pregnant, Have a uterus that is abnormally shaped inside, Have a pelvic infection called pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) or have current behavior that puts you at high risk of PID (for example, because you are having sex with several men, or your partner is having sex with other women), Have had an infection in your uterus after a pregnancy or abortion in the past 3 months, Have cancer of the uterus or cervix, Have unexplained bleeding from your vagina, Have an infection in your cervix, Have Wilson's disease (a disorder in how the body handles copper), Are allergic to anything in ParaGard®, Already have an intrauterine contraceptive in your uterus.

How is ParaGard® placed in the uterus?

ParaGard® is placed in your uterus during an office visit. Your healthcare provider first examines you to find the position of your uterus. Next, he or she will cleanse your vagina and cervix, measure your uterus, and then slide a plastic tube containing ParaGard® into your uterus. The tube is removed, leaving ParaGard® inside your uterus. Two white threads extend into your vagina. The threads are trimmed so they are just long enough for you to feel with your fingers when doing a self-check. As ParaGard® goes in, you may feel cramping or pinching. Some women feel faint, nauseated, or dizzy for a few minutes afterwards. Your healthcare provider may ask you to lie down for a while and to get up slowly.

How do I check that ParaGard® is in my uterus?

Visit your healthcare provider for a check-up about one month after placement to make sure ParaGard® is still in your uterus. You can also check to make sure that ParaGard® is still in your uterus by reaching up to the top of your vagina with clean fingers to feel the two threads. Do not pull on the threads. If you cannot feel the threads, ask your healthcare provider to check if ParaGard® is in the right place. If you can feel more of ParaGard® than just the threads, ParaGard® is *not* in the right place. If you can't see your healthcare provider right away, use an additional birth control method. If ParaGard® is in the wrong place, your chances of getting pregnant are increased. It is a good habit for you to check that ParaGard® is in place once a month. You may use tampons when you are using ParaGard®.

What if I become pregnant while using ParaGard®?

If you think you are pregnant, contact your healthcare professional *right away*. If you are pregnant and ParaGard® is in your uterus, you may get a severe infection or shock, have a miscarriage or premature labor and delivery, or even die. Because of these risks, your healthcare provider will recommend that you have ParaGard® removed, even though removal may cause miscarriage.

If you continue a pregnancy with ParaGard® in place, see your healthcare provider regularly. Contact your healthcare provider right away if you get fever, chills, cramping, pain, bleeding, flu-like symptoms, or an unusual, bad smelling vaginal discharge.

A pregnancy with ParaGard® in place has a greater than usual chance of being ectopic (outside your uterus). Ectopic pregnancy is an emergency that may require surgery. An ectopic pregnancy can cause internal bleeding, infertility, and death. Unusual vaginal bleeding or abdominal pain may be signs of an ectopic pregnancy.

Copper in ParaGard® does not seem to cause birth defects.

What side effects can I expect with ParaGard®?

The most common side effects of ParaGard® are heavier, longer periods and spotting between periods; most of these side effects diminish after 2-3 months. However, if your menstrual flow continues to be heavy or long, or spotting continues, contact your healthcare provider. Infrequently, serious side effects may occur: *Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)*: Uncommonly, ParaGard® and other IUDs are associated with PID. PID is an infection of the uterus, tubes, and nearby organs. PID is most likely to occur in the first 20 days after placement. You have a higher chance of getting PID if you or your partner have sex with more than one person. PID is treated with antibiotics. However, PID can cause serious problems such as infertility, ectopic pregnancy, and chronic pelvic pain. Rarely, PID may even cause death. More serious cases of PID require surgery or a hysterectomy (removal of the uterus). Contact your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the signs of PID: abdominal or pelvic pain, painful sex, unusual or bad smelling vaginal discharge, chills, heavy bleeding, or fever. *Difficult removals*: Occasionally ParaGard® may be hard to remove because it is stuck in the uterus. Surgery may sometimes be needed to remove ParaGard®. *Perforation*: Rarely, ParaGard® goes through the wall of the uterus, especially during placement. This is called perforation. If ParaGard® perforates the uterus, it should be removed. Surgery may be needed. Perforation can cause infection, scarring, or damage to other organs. If ParaGard® perforates the uterus, you are not protected from pregnancy. *Expulsion*: ParaGard® may partially or completely fall out of the uterus. This is called expulsion. Women who have never been pregnant may be more likely to expel ParaGard® than women who have been pregnant before. If you think that ParaGard® has partly or completely fallen out, use an additional birth control method, such as a condom and call your healthcare provider. You may have other side effects with ParaGard®. For example, you may have anemia (low blood count), backache, pain during sex, menstrual cramps, allergic reaction, vaginal infection, vaginal discharge, faintness, or pain. This is not a complete list of possible side effects. If you have questions about a side effect, check with your healthcare provider.

When should I call my healthcare provider?

Call your healthcare provider if you have any concerns about ParaGard®. Be sure to call if you:

- Think you are pregnant
- Have pelvic pain or pain during sex
- Have unusual vaginal discharge or genital sores
- Have unexplained fever
- Might be exposed to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)
- Cannot feel ParaGard®'s threads or can feel the threads are much longer
- Can feel any other part of the ParaGard® besides the threads
- Become HIV positive or your partner becomes HIV positive
- Have severe or prolonged vaginal bleeding
- Miss a menstrual period

Where can I get more information about ParaGard®?

You can get more information at www.ParaGard.com or by calling 1-877-ParaGard (1-877-727-2427).



Teva Women's Health, Inc.
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This brief summary is based on ParaGard® FDA-approved patient labeling, Iss. 6/2013.

PAR-40022

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quirky quotes from kids

GRANT, 3 I ran a 5K while pushing my son and daughter in a double stroller. Naturally, I had my runner's number pinned to my shirt. About an hour after the race, Grant asked me, "Mommy, do you still have your price tag on?" **Carisa Conley; Glencoe, IL**

MARI, 3 I often have my hands full, so I use Siri on my iPhone to set up reminders and get directions. With two children under 4, I usually have to speak loudly to be heard over the noise. One afternoon we were stuck in traffic, so I handed my smartphone to my daughter to keep her entertained. When Siri was accidentally activated, Mari called out, "Uh-oh, Mama, it's that lady you're always yelling at!" **Kate Kutzleb; Waxhaw, NC**

DALLEN, 5 After I had sneezed several times, I said, "Ugh, I can't stop sneezing!" My insightful son responded, "Well, if you can't stop sneezing, then maybe you should just enjoy it!" **Amber Bryce; Tucson, AZ**

KARLY, 4 My husband and I were trying to convince my daughter to try celery sticks with peanut butter. I told her, "I bet all the Disney princesses try new things." She responded seriously, "Yeah, Mom, just like Snow White tried an apple and it killed her." **Becky Klette; Glen Carbon, IL**

BEN, 4 I took my son to vote with me, explaining that he needed to be 18 to participate. On our way out, the volunteer gave us both a sticker. Ben whispered to me, "Mom, the man thinks I'm 18!" **Marianne Cohen; Solon, OH**

MAKAYLAH, 5 My daughter came home from kindergarten complaining that a boy in her class had used the "S-word" and the "N-word" at school. I was appalled, and insisted that she tell me what he said. She whispered, "Shot and needle." **Erika Kindoll; Leesport, PA**



crack us up & win!

Your funny story could appear on this page and you could win a \$50 gift card from Gymboree. Plus, you could also win the Parents Best of Bloopers grand prize—a \$500 gift card from Gymboree. Find out how to enter and see the abbreviated rules on page 159.

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KEEP THEM HEALTHY AND HAPPY



the lying game You'd better watch what you *don't* say around your kids. A new study from MIT found that children as young as 5 can recognize when you aren't telling the whole truth, and they may even call you on it. If your child knows something you don't want to tell others, researchers recommend explaining why you're holding back details so she doesn't think you're being sneaky.

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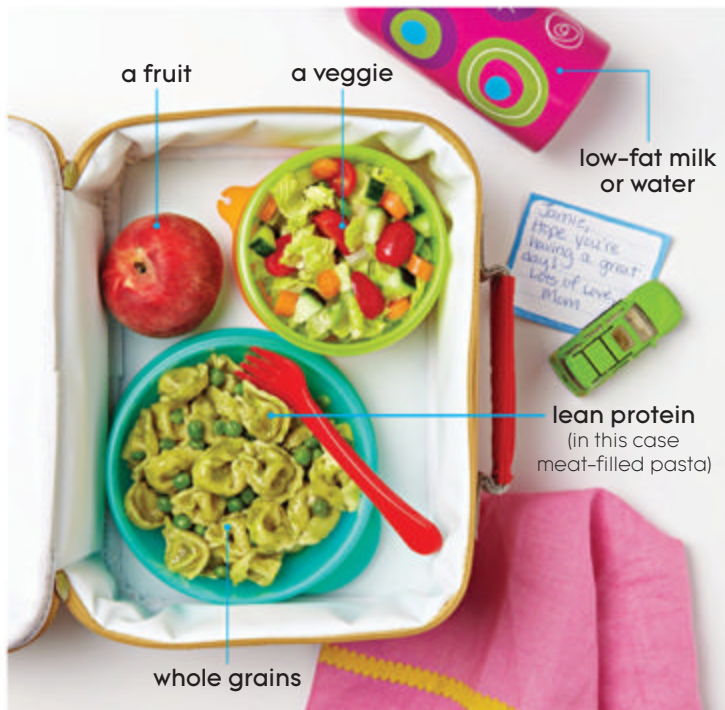
The number of unnecessary prescriptions that are written for children in the U.S. annually. A study published in *Pediatrics* says antibiotics are being prescribed twice as often as they should be for children with respiratory infections.



Lunch-box lesson

Which do you expect to be healthier: a lunch bought in the school cafeteria or one packed lovingly at home? If you guessed Mom's or Dad's meal, you'd be wrong. Researchers at the Friedman School of Nutrition at Tufts University in Boston documented what's in the lunch boxes of more than 600 grade-schoolers and found that only 27 percent met at least three of the five National School Lunch Program guidelines. "The lunches contained more packaged foods than anything

else, and almost a quarter of them lacked an entrée such as a sandwich or leftovers," notes senior author Jeanne P. Goldberg, Ph.D., R.D. What came from home instead: plenty of snacks, desserts, and sugary drinks. "Parents are juggling time, cost, and convenience, along with what appeals to their kids, and nutrition sometimes gets lost in the equation," says Dr. Goldberg. For a lunch that reflects the updated school-nutrition guidelines, include these ingredients:



A fresh idea

MilkCharms are a reusable (and super-cute) way to mark a bottle of breast milk. Just set the date and time on both sides of the floral dial and you won't have to stress about spoilage. Attach these dishwasher-safe charms to any bottle. \$15 for three; amazon.com

Organic Cheese? Yes, Please!



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We know the best foods are the ones that leave parents and kids cheering for more. That's why we always do our best to use simple, recognizable ingredients, like real organic cheese and pasta in our delicious mac. It's a choice parents can feel good about—and a whole lot of yum for kids.

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Diane Reott with Matthew



THE POWER OF PARENTS

Speaking up about dyslexia

Diane Reott's son Matthew struggled in school for years due to dyslexia so severe that the neuropsychologist who tested him said he'd probably have to learn Braille. After fighting for the resources that Matthew needed—he's now 18 and reading—Reott, of Newtown Square, Pennsylvania, is helping other kids get an early diagnosis and proper assistance as well. Two years ago she formed **Pennsylvania Dyslexia Literacy Coalition** to raise dyslexia awareness, increase teacher training in colleges, and pass legislation to help define and improve how early-reading instruction should be taught. The organization helped establish a pilot program that will operate in three school districts, where all kindergarten students will be screened for risk factors tied to reading deficiencies and dyslexia. "Every child deserves a chance to learn to read regardless of his or her learning difference," says Reott.

★ *Parents* donated \$500 to Pennsylvania Dyslexia Literacy Coalition. To nominate your organization or community-service project and to be considered for a donation, e-mail advocacy@parents.com.

Check the ingredients in your hand soap.



SHOULD YOU WORRY?

Research shows moms-to-be may need to avoid some antibacterial soaps.

➔ **The facts** Triclosan—an ingredient in some antibacterial hand soaps, toothpastes, and deodorants—has been found in the urine of pregnant women and in the cord blood of their newborns, according to a new report by the American Chemical Society. "This is disturbing because this ingredient hasn't been tested for toxicity to humans, including to the fetus," says Jerome A. Paulson, M.D., professor of pediatrics and environmental and occupational health at George Washington University. "Triclosan is toxic to fish and other aquatic

organisms, and it may have endocrine-disrupting characteristics, which can affect development."

➔ **What to do** Dr. Paulson recommends checking labels of your personal-care products, and avoiding triclosan: "Since it has no benefit to humans and is harmful to the environment, I see no reason to use it," he explains. Unilever, Avon, and Johnson & Johnson have pledged to phase triclosan out of any products in which it remains within the next few years.

TWEET YOU NEED

Your child's annual checkup should include a discussion of media use. Eyes, ears, heart, lungs, & what social media do you use?

—Kate Land, M.D. @KPKiddoc

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0074300-033952



Biking helps kids think more clearly (and behave).

Bikes instead of desks?

While some schools have nixed recess to make more time for studying, others are moving in the opposite direction—incorporating physical activity into the classroom to improve behavior and concentration. Check out a few active-learning programs growing in the United States. You may want your kid's school to take one for a spin.

➔ Stand and Study

When Mark E. Benden, Ph.D., director of The Ergonomics Center at Texas A&M Health Science Center, and his colleagues tested standing desks in three elementary schools, they found that students burned 15 percent more calories than kids at sitting desks, and it was easier for them to concentrate. “We think better on our feet than in our seat,” says Dr. Benden. “Children with ADHD, in particular, seem to benefit from the engagement and focus boost that the desks offer.”

➔ Words on Wheels

Kids in the Read and Ride program at Ward Elementary in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, can read books and magazines in a room filled with donated exercise bikes as a reward or hop on a bike in the corner of their classroom if they need some extra stimulation during the day,

says Scott Ertl, M.Ed., the school counselor and founder. Students who spent the most time on the bikes achieved an 83 percent proficiency in reading on standardized tests, while those who spent the least time in the program had only 41 percent proficiency. The activity can also help kids with anxiety disorders or hyperactivity release extra energy.

➔ Burn Before You Learn

Many experts favor starting the day with exercise, then covering the difficult subjects right after, while the brain is most susceptible to learning. Highlander Way Middle School, in Howell, Michigan, is doing just that. The school's phys ed teacher has created two mobile fitness labs with equipment like kettlebells, BOSU balls, and resistance bands, which teachers can check out for their students anytime.

*** The Read and Ride program has expanded to 30 other schools since 2009. To learn more about it, visit readandride.org.**



Medicine-cabinet must-have

Whether the culprit is a hot cookie sheet, a glue gun, or even a rug, minor burns happen all the time—and they hurt! We were impressed by FirstDegree's Burn Cream and Maximum Pain Relief Burn Spray. *Parents* photo editor Kristen O'Hara, who was burned when helping her pastry-chef husband in the kitchen, says, “It took the pain away quickly, and the next day I could barely even tell I'd gotten a burn.” Both products are safe for kids ages 2 and up, and double as great itch relievers for bug bites. \$5 to \$9; firstdegree.com

1,000

That's about how much more sodium (in milligrams) kids consume than they should, finds a new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Kids should have no more than 2,300mg/day, but those studied consumed an average of 3,279mg of sodium daily.



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Soothing anxious kids

Of course you want to comfort your child when she's scared, but new research conducted at Arizona State University shows that some parental reactions may actually reinforce kids' nerves. You can easily fall into the "protection trap" by taking over for your child in an uncomfortable situation, says lead author Lindsay Holly. She suggests how to navigate common anxiety-provoking scenarios in a way that boosts your kid's confidence in the process.

	WHAT NOT TO DO	WHY NOT?	A BETTER RESPONSE
You're at a restaurant and your child is too shy to order for himself.	Order for him	Taking over to speed things along eliminates the opportunity for your kid to become more comfortable speaking up.	Practice ordering before you get to the restaurant. When the server reaches your table, rub your son's back and say, "We did this at home. You can do it here too!"
Your child has a bad dream and begs to come into your bed.	Cave and let her sleep with you	Helping her to manage her fear will be more productive in the long run.	Acknowledge that she's scared, let her know that dreams aren't real, and tell her that she's safe. Then add, "I bet you can fall asleep in your bed, just like Mommy."
Your school-age child is afraid to attend a drop-off birthday party.	Allow him to skip the shindig	Letting him bail implies that there's something to fear in social situations.	Empathize with his reluctance, but talk about the fun he might miss. Say, "We all get nervous, but I bet you'll have a blast because so many of your friends will be there!"
Your child is hesitant to learn to ride a bike.	Ask "Are you scared? Are you nervous? It's going to be fine!"	Over-reassuring signals that there's a reason to be anxious.	Show confidence in her skills and recall a past achievement that's similar. "You're brave! Remember the time you learned to swing on the monkey bars? You can do this."

Potty-training news

Kids who start toilet training before age 2 have triple the risk of daytime wetting issues than those who start later, a new study from Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, found. Early trainers tend to hold their stool and become constipated, which puts pressure on the bladder and leads to accidents.



Help for school struggles

If your child has learning and attention issues, [Understood.org](https://www.understood.org) may provide the support you need. The new site has resources such as free access to experts via daily live chats, webinars, a tool called "Through Your Child's Eyes" that gives parents a true sense of their child's difficulties, and practical tips for behavior issues. Managed by The National Center for Learning Disabilities, [Understood.org](https://www.understood.org) aims to create a community of families affected by learning and attention issues and, equally important, help others realize what it feels like to struggle with such an issue.

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"Mommy,
I don't feel so
good."

that queasy feeling

Is your child prone to motion sickness? Our tips can save your trips.

by **NANCY RONES**

MY MOM instincts failed me on a family vacation to the Blue Ridge Mountains in North Carolina. As we drove along the winding roads, I heard my then 8-year-old daughter, Sydney, mutter from the backseat that she wasn't feeling well. She's just tired, I thought. But after more complaining, I finally turned around. Her pale face said it all. I told my husband to pull over pronto,

but it was too late. Clean up, middle row! Unfortunately, her sensitive stomach became an increasingly common problem when we traveled. During the next few months, Syd got nauseated on a bumpy airplane flight and at an amusement park.

Motion sickness can kick in at any age and may affect up to half of all kids at some point. Whether it happens in a car or a boat, on a

plane or a Ferris wheel, the basic cause is the same. A child's eyes and inner ears sense how he's moving and transmit that information to the brain. Problems arise when there's an inconsistency between these incoming messages (what experts call a "sensory mismatch"), explains Richard F. Lewis, M.D., medical director of the Jenks Vestibular Diagnostic Laboratory

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Nicky with Chiara



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at Massachusetts Eye and Ear, in Boston. For example, if your kid is watching TV on a plane during takeoff, his ears sense the motion but his eyes perceive that he's sitting still. When these conflicting signals collide, he may experience sweating, dizziness, a headache, and, in some cases, a wave of nausea that can lead to vomiting.

Some kids are bothered by almost any movement, while lucky ones have a high resistance and never feel ill. "We don't know why one kid gets nauseated on thrill rides but is fine in a car," says motion-sickness researcher Max Levine, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at Siena College, in Loudonville, New York. It may be related to variations in the anatomy of a child's inner ear. Anxiety can also play a role: A kid is more likely to get sick if she had a bad experience on a past trip.

Of course, certain types of motion are more likely to affect kids than

others. The slow rocking of a large boat isn't something many of us are used to, and it's a type of movement the inner ear doesn't sense well. Spinning rides at an amusement park (like teacups or the Scrambler) can certainly spur symptoms. A turbulence-free plane ride, by contrast, usually isn't problematic because the constant speed cuts out inner-ear signals.

Whether your child gets carsick depends on a number of factors, including your route, the length of the drive, and where in the car he's sitting (which affects his visual perception). Classic triggers: trips that involve frequent lane changes, twisty roads, or stop-and-go traffic.

SMOOTHER RIDES

Once you realize that your child is vulnerable to motion sickness, there are a number of steps you can take.

➔ Work on positioning.

Place your child's car seat in the middle of the backseat so she has a clear view of the front window, suggests Elisha McCoy, M.D., assistant professor of internal medicine and pediatrics at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital, in Memphis. Tell her to lean her head back against the seat rather than letting it move around. If she's feeling disoriented on a ship, have her stare straight ahead at the horizon. On a theme-park ride where you can control the motion (such as how fast or which way the giant teacup spins), let your child direct the action. "When her brain has information about what motion to anticipate, it can override the sensory mismatch," says Dr. Lewis. That's why drivers rarely feel sick.

➔ Avoid screens.

While digital devices that allow endless viewing of *Frozen* are practically required equipment in a



recommended remedies

Advice from parents who've conquered their kid's motion sickness

● **take breathers** "On long drives, we'll visit a rest stop or take a short walk. If my boys feel ill, I dab MotionEaze behind their ears. It contains natural oils, and the scent takes their mind off worrying about getting sick."

Lori Bloomberg, mother of three; New York City

● **keep his mouth moving** "Chewing gum helps distract my son from carsickness—or maybe he's less apt to vomit because he doesn't want to waste it. Either way, I always keep a big pack in the car."

Nicole Sankowski, mother of two; Oak Park, Illinois

● **be prepared** "I store disposable scented diaper sacks in the seat pocket. In case my son doesn't open one in time, I keep Biokleen Bac-Out Stain + Odor Remover handy."

Gennifer Raney, mother of two; Charlotte, North Carolina

● **teach them two tricks** "We used pocket fans for blowing cool air and acupressure wristbands. When we didn't have them on one trip, my son knew to roll down the window and press on his wrist. Crisis averted."

Amy Baxter M.D., pediatrician and mother of three; Atlanta, Georgia

● **try this sweet solution** "We give our girls Queasy Pops, which are made with ingredients said to prevent nausea. And they work. When we substituted regular candy, they got sick."

Darrin Sarto, father of two; West Hills, California



Winding roads can be torture for kids prone to carsickness.

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family vehicle, experts say they're a no-no for kids prone to motion sickness. The images from movies and video games (particularly those with fast-moving graphics) create excessive visual stimulation that can confuse a kid's perception of motion and bring on symptoms. Reading may also cause a sensory disagreement, as a child's eyes are fixed while his ears detect the motion. You're better off letting your kid listen to audio books or an iPod, or playing low-tech games such as "I spy" or "Guess what animal I'm thinking of."

➔ **Time your trips right.**

If possible, it's a good idea to schedule car rides to coincide with your child's naptime, since visual cues aren't sent to the brain when he's sleeping, notes Dr. Lewis. "We plan car travel for when our

daughter Jo is most likely to drift off," says Maran Sheils, a mom of two in Portland, Oregon. Traveling after dark is another smart strategy, since it eliminates most of the visual signals. Otherwise, your best bet is to leave very early in the morning, which will improve your odds of avoiding traffic.

➔ **Think about what you feed your kid.**

If she's prone to carsickness, you might be tempted to have her travel on an empty stomach. Don't. "Not eating makes a child's stomach more susceptible to an abnormal rhythm, which is linked to nausea," says Dr. Levine. While you don't want your kid to overeat, she should have some food in her system before you start your trip. Easy-to-digest meals and snacks that are high in protein (such as peanut butter

on crackers or a grilled-chicken sandwich) tend to be best. End with a ginger-flavored cookie or candy, since this spice is believed to help soothe an upset stomach. Avoid foods with a strong odor. Make sure your kid drinks enough water to help avoid dehydration, which can also intensify nausea.

➔ **Watch for symptoms.**

If your child says he's starting to feel sick, have him look out the window. Dr. Levine's research found that coaching your child to take a series of slow, deep breaths and aiming the A/C vent toward his face helps normalize the tummy's rhythm. If his nausea intensifies, pull over. Have him rest with his eyes closed until the symptoms fade. If he's feeling warm, remove extra layers of clothing and wipe his skin with a damp paper towel.



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➔ Try an ounce of prevention.

There's mixed opinion about the effectiveness of acupressure wristbands, but kid-size ones may at the least have a placebo effect by easing your child's anxiety, notes Dr. McCoy. You can also ask your pediatrician about Dramamine for Kids. This nausea-preventing medicine is safe for children 2 and older, though it can cause serious drowsiness. If you're worried about arriving at your destination with a groggy child, use half the recommended dose for her age.

When all of these efforts fail and you're faced with a messy cleanup, take heart. Motion sickness usually tapers off by adolescence. I'm still waiting for that day. For now, I'm relieved that Sydney has decided to eat carefully on long rides and forgo the flying swings. ✕



If you see this woozy face, it's time to pull over.

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8 reasons your child is alive today

You can thank
these unsung heroes
for protecting
generations of kids.

by **DARSHAK SANGHAVI, M.D.**

Bread, pasta, and cold cereal

I Spina bifida, one of the most common major birth defects, can be prevented by taking folic acid before and during early pregnancy—but many women don't take prenatal vitamins until they know they're pregnant. So, in 1998, the FDA started requiring that all enriched cereal-grain products (including wheat flour, bread, rolls, cornmeal, pasta, and rice) be fortified with folic acid to ensure that more women get this key B vitamin. Since then, the incidence of spina bifida has dropped by nearly 25 percent.

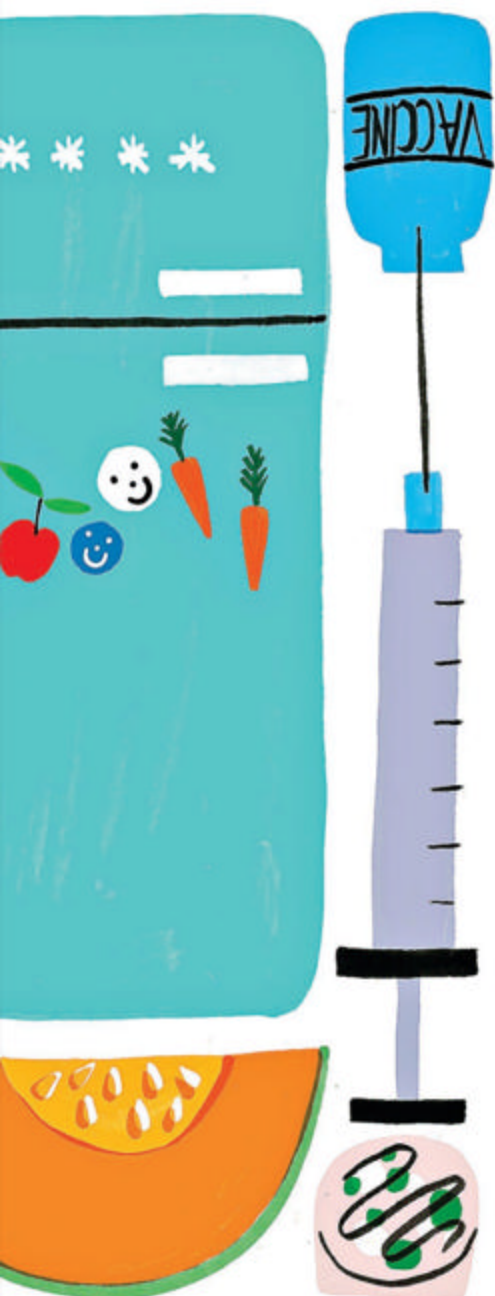


**2 A TEST TUBE
ACCIDENTALLY LEFT ON
A WINDOWSILL** Babies,

particularly premature ones, may develop jaundice, a condition in which the skin and whites of the eyes turn yellow because of excess bilirubin, the yellow-colored

pigment in blood. If severe jaundice goes untreated, it can cause permanent brain damage. In the 1950s, a biochemist put a tube of blood from a jaundiced baby near a window—and found that sunlight lowered the levels of bilirubin in the blood. Around the same time, a nurse

noticed sunlight seemed to improve jaundice. Soon, others figured out that the blue part of sunlight's visible spectrum forces a chemical reaction that breaks down bilirubin into a form the body can get rid of—which led to the use of blue “phototherapy” lights to cure jaundice.



European milkmaids

During the late 1700s, doctors realized that these women rarely caught the often fatal disease smallpox. The milkmaids were immune if they'd been infected by a related but milder form of the disease that affected cows, known as cowpox. An English doctor, Edward Jenner, successfully inoculated people with cowpox, laying the foundation for modern vaccination against many deadly diseases. In fact, the word vaccine comes from the Latin word for cow: vacca.

5 LATEX HOUSE PAINT AND UNLEADED GASOLINE

Lead-based paint tastes like candy (in ancient times, Romans unwisely sweetened wine with lead powder), which is why young children will eat chips of lead paint that flake off walls and windowsills. But lead poisoning can be devastating, causing brain damage, seizures, and even death. In 1978, lead was banned from household paints, and lead-free latex paint became the new standard. Soon afterward, lead was eliminated from gasoline. The results were dramatic: Since the 1970s, the average amount of lead in children's blood has fallen about 90 percent.



The refrigerator Thanks to inventors—including Benjamin Franklin—who experimented with refrigeration, we can safely store perishable foods such as milk, meat, fish, and produce. Before the first affordable electric household iceboxes were available in the late 1920s, Americans were more frequently sickened by typhoid fever and other food-related diseases because bacteria multiply in warm temperatures.



A LITTLE PLASTIC CYLINDER

Almost a century ago, doctors realized that small toys could get stuck in a child's airway. Beginning in the 1970s, the government developed a "choke test cylinder"—a plastic tube that is 1¼ inches wide and 2¼ inches long—into which no toy, part of a toy, or piece that could be broken off from a toy should be able to fit completely if it's intended for kids under 3. Now used by the Consumer Product Safety Commission, this cylinder has prevented many children from choking on toys.

S CANTALOUPE FROM PEORIA, ILLINOIS

Children used to die from pneumonia and even simple infections like strep throat before penicillin was discovered by Alexander Fleming, a Scottish bacteriologist who had been studying a fungus. But no one knew how to make large quantities of it; by 1942, U.S. scientists had only produced enough to treat one patient. Then researchers in Peoria discovered a moldy cantaloupe in the trash that contained a strain of fungus that made astronomical amounts of penicillin as it fermented the fruit. This process was industrialized and penicillin finally became available—to treat World War II soldiers injured on D-day and, ultimately, children all around the world.



Leonard Rivkin, a furniture salesman In the early days of car travel, parents would hang a canvas bag over a seat of their car to hold their infant—putting a baby in danger if an accident occurred. In the 1960s, the co-owner of the kids' furniture store Guys and Dolls, in Aurora, Colorado, invented a child-safety seat, a metal contraption to hold a child securely between front bucket seats. Hundreds of children's lives are saved each year by today's more advanced car seats.

secrets for breastfeeding success

The only tips you'll ever need, from the experts who've figured out the smartest tricks, shortcuts, and solutions

by MICHELLE CROUCH

I DIDN'T bother buying bottles before I had my daughter, Stella. Believe it or not, I'd been dreaming of breastfeeding since I was a little girl, and I was sure I'd be able to nurse. But my new baby and I had a surprisingly tough time. Before I even left the hospital, my nipples were chapped and sore, and I faced the hard truth familiar to so many new moms: Nursing may be natural, but it's also downright difficult. So difficult, in fact, that many moms just give up. While 79 percent of mothers breastfeed soon after birth, only 49 percent are still nursing six months later, according to the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention. That's a surprisingly low number considering that the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends exclusive breastfeeding for about six months. What's more, evidence shows that nursing lowers your baby's risk of ear infections, stomach viruses, asthma, the flu, and diabetes.

I eventually got much-needed help from a wonderful lactation consultant, Jan Ellen Brown, and I breastfed Stella until just after her first birthday. To help other struggling moms, I persuaded Brown and nine other experts to share their most effective techniques for mastering nursing.



With the right
setup, nursing can
be comfortable.





Pre-baby prep

LINE UP HELP. “Consider meeting with a lactation consultant or another nursing expert *before* you have the baby. She can share tips that will help in the beginning, and you’ll know whom to call if you have a problem. International Board Certified Lactation Consultants, or IBCLCs, have had the most intensive training.”

—Dee Kassing, IBCLC, a lactation consultant in the St. Louis, Missouri, area

SEE THE REAL THING. “If you have a friend who’s nursing, ask if you can watch. If not, attend a La Leche League meeting or another breastfeeding support group where you can see moms feeding their babies.”

—Jessica Claire, IBCLC, a lactation consultant in Los Angeles

TELL THE HOSPITAL WHAT YOU WANT. “Ask whether you can keep your baby in the room with you at all times if possible. Rooming in will help you bond with your baby, learn feeding cues, and better establish breastfeeding.” —Laurie Jones, M.D., IBCLC, a pediatrician in Phoenix and founder of DrMilk.org



What to do in the hospital

* Don’t wait to get help.

“If the nurse in the hospital says your latch ‘looks great’ but it still hurts, call a lactation expert (IBCLC). If your doctor says your baby is not gaining enough weight, call. If your nipple is injured, call. If your gut says something isn’t right, speak up. You can save yourself weeks and weeks of pain and trouble.”

—Jaye Simpson, IBCLC, lactation consultant in Sacramento, California

* Try to nurse within the first hour after delivery.

“Two hours later, many babies will be hard to rouse. It may seem like you’re producing very little at first—maybe just a few drops of colostrum—but a 1- or 2-day-old baby’s stomach is only the size of a marble.” —Jenny Thomas, M.D., IBCLC, a pediatrician in Franklin, Wisconsin, and author of *Dr. Jen’s Guide to Breastfeeding*

*** Enlist Dad.** “If possible, your partner should be there when you meet with the lactation consultant, both in the hospital and afterward.

Dads can be good problem-solvers, and you may find yourself feeling so overwhelmed and sleep-deprived that it will be hard for you to process information.” —Jan Ellen Brown, IBCLC, lactation consultant in Charlotte, North Carolina, and coauthor of *25 Things Every Nursing Mother Needs to Know*

* Focus on those little feet.

“Babies always seem to nurse better when their feet are touching something, like your leg, the arm of the chair, or a pillow tucked next to you. It makes them feel more secure.”

—Veronica Jacobsen, a doula and lactation counselor in Richfield, Minnesota

Avoid formula at first.

“Even if you’re not sure how long you’ll breastfeed, go all in while you’re in the hospital. Any formula that’s not medically necessary can affect your milk supply.”

—Dr. Jones



The tools every breastfeeding mom needs

Nursing pillow Unlike other pillows, it wraps around your body and helps with positioning. It can also relieve stress on your back, neck, and shoulders.

Sore-nipple soother

Lanolin-based creams are a proven remedy, but some consultants prefer organic coconut oil or Motherlove nipple cream, which are not animal products. (Lanolin comes from sheep. Either

can occasionally cause an allergic reaction in a sensitive mom.) All are considered safe for babies. Water-based hydrogels can also promote healing. But your nipples won’t heal unless you first solve any underlying latch problems.

Tracking system Download an app such as Baby Nursing (free, iTunes) to record feedings and diaper counts and track doctor’s visits during those foggy first weeks.

Expert access Have the number of someone you can call for help (a local lactation consultant or a La Leche League leader) programmed into your phone.

Double electric pump It’s a must-have if you’re going back to work; look for one with graduated suction-level settings (rather than just high, medium, and low) and several sizes of flanges (breast shields) available.

**Don't push
the back of your
baby's head.**

"That triggers his instinct to resist and chomp down. Instead, put your hands at the nape of your baby's neck, and bring him swiftly to your breast."

—Leigh Anne O'Connor, IBCLC, lactation consultant in New York City



How to get a deep latch

POSITION YOURSELVES NOSE TO NIPPLE, BELLY TO BELLY.

"Make sure that your baby's stomach is touching yours, so she doesn't have to turn her head to latch. And point your nipple at her nose, not at her mouth, so she'll lift her head up, open her mouth wide, and latch on deeply." —Jacobsen

ENCOURAGE A MOUTHFUL.

"If you're breastfeeding sitting upright, bring your baby to your breast once his mouth is completely open. Press between his shoulders firmly to bring him to you, while you support your breast. Your nipple will fill the roof of his mouth. If it still hurts after the first few sucks, de-latch and reposition." —Brown



Make it through the first few weeks

*** Don't count minutes.** "You can leave your baby on the first breast until she comes off on her own and then offer the second breast. It's typical for some babies to take one breast at some feedings and both breasts at some." —Nancy Mohrbacher, IBCLC, lactation consultant in the Chicago area and author of *Breastfeeding Answers Made Simple*

*** Avoid pacifiers at first.** "The AAP recommends delaying the pacifier for the first month because it can suppress hunger cues and steal time from the breast during a critical period. After that, offering a pacifier shouldn't hurt." —Dr. Jones

*** Lie on your side.** "It lets you rest your shoulders and lower back if you tend to hunch over, and it's good for moms who've had a C-section, who have carpal tunnel syndrome, or who are just exhausted. Put a pillow between your knees and your arm under your head, and bring the baby in facing you. Have someone help you at first." —Brown

★ **Try a nursing stool.** “It can help give you more of a lap, especially if you’re short, and it takes the pressure off if you’ve had an episiotomy. When I watch a mother use one, I can see right away on her face how much more comfortable she is.” —Brown

★ **Offer the first bottle at 4 to 6 weeks.** “If you wait until 8 weeks, you risk bottle refusal. Have someone other than you give the first one—and get out of the house so you’re not tempted to help out.” —Dr. Jones

★ **Don’t buy a whole nursing wardrobe.** “It can be easier to just lift up your shirt. If you wear a blouse over a camisole, you’ll have a lot of coverage.” —Brown



Lose the snooze.

“If your infant keeps falling asleep on your breast, try tickling the bottom of his feet, stroking him under the chin, or touching him with a wet washcloth.”

—O’Connor



Step up your milk supply

LOOK AT YOUR BABY, NOT AT THE SCALE. “I’ve seen so many moms whose baby looks healthy, nurses well, and meets milestones, but they’ve lost confidence in breastfeeding because their doctor told them that their baby’s weight was not on the charts. If you received a lot of IV fluids during labor, your baby could be artificially ‘heavier’ at birth. If he has low weight gain, but he’s smiling, his linear growth and head circumference and neurological development are notably okay, I’d get a second opinion before giving formula.” —Jay Gordon, M.D., pediatrician in Santa Monica, California

TRY A STRONGER PUMP. “Some hands-free pumps and the ones covered through insurance aren’t as powerful as you need when you’re establishing your milk supply, so you may want to rent a hospital-grade one, at least at first.” —O’Connor

DON’T GET A USED PUMP. “A good electric pump has a limited number of hours of motor life before the suction starts to die.” —Simpson

→ Returning to work

★ **Ease in.** “Consider starting back on a Thursday rather than a Monday, so you have only two days away from your baby at first.” —Claire

★ Understand how much milk babies actually drink.

“Unlike those on formula, breast milk-fed babies need the same amount of milk per day when they’re 6 months old as they did when they were 1 month old. Really! By about

1 month, a baby has established how much breast milk she’ll need and you don’t have to keep increasing how much she eats as she grows. But a lot of moms (and docs) are still applying formula rules to breast milk-fed babies. So remember: If you’ll be pumping for the next day’s feedings when you go back to work, all you really have to do is maintain your current supply.” —Dr. Jones

Feed the baby, not the freezer.

“You don’t need to pump like a maniac on your maternity leave. You may end up with clogged ducts, mastitis, letdown that’s too fast, and exhaustion. You need only a small reserve.”

—Dr. Jones

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Pump up your pumping

***Get the right fit.** “A lot of mothers don’t realize that pump flanges come in different sizes. If the standard shields that come with your pump are too tight or too big, you won’t pump as much milk and you could even cause damage. A lactation consultant can help you choose the right ones.” —Claire

***Make your own DIY hands-free bra.** “You don’t have to spend a fortune on a fancy bra designed for pumping. Instead, buy a sports bra that’s snug, cut little slits in it, and stick the breast shields in there.” —Claire

***Get in the mood.** “To help encourage letdown, download a galactagogue, a relaxation recording designed to stimulate milk production. Search ‘podcasts for breastfeeding’ on iTunes for a free one.” —Dr. Jones

***Make cleaning a breeze.** “Mothers may be glad to know that as long as your baby is healthy, you really don’t have to clean your pump parts every time you’ve finished pumping. You can simply put all the parts in a plastic bag, store them in a fridge or a cooler, and pull them out to use again a few hours later.” —Dr. Jones



Fixing common problems

Heal damaged nipples.

“Use water-based hydrogel pads or apply enough purified lanolin to keep nipples moist between feedings.”

—Mohrbacher

Resolve tongue-tie.

“If you’re having pain even though your latch looks great, ask a lactation consultant whether your baby may have tongue-tie. A specialist can treat the problem.”

—Jacobsen

Prevent blocked ducts.

“Avoid anything that puts pressure on part of your breasts. That includes baby carriers, diaper-bag straps, even sleeping on the same side every night.”

—Dr. Jones

What’s “laid-back breastfeeding”?

Some lactation consultants are embracing a different technique called laid-back breastfeeding, or “biological nurturing.” A few early studies have found it can make breastfeeding easier. To try it, lean back or recline slightly, and then bring your naked baby skin-to-skin and facedown on your chest. Use your hands to gently guide your baby’s mouth to your nipple, then let gravity and his instincts take over. “Most babies will bob over and self-attach with a great deep latch,” says lactation consultant Jessica Claire. “It’s a little more relaxing for you and can really help if you’ve been having pain.”

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playdates without drama

Your child's friendships are bound to have ups and downs, but the right approach can help her smooth the bumps. **by AVIVA PATZ**

WHEN MY daughter Sadie was in kindergarten, I used to ask her which friends she played with at recess. More than once she replied, "No one wanted to play with me." I would imagine my lonely 5-year-old kicking pebbles on the playground while the other kids ran and laughed nearby. It broke my heart. So I made an effort to host more playdates and helped Sadie practice ways to feel

comfortable breaking the ice with her peers. I'm glad I did. By second grade her social situation had improved dramatically.

"Your child needs buddies as much as she needs food and exercise," says Fred Frankel, Ph.D., director of the UCLA Parent Training & Children's Friendship Program and author of *Friends Forever*. One review of research found that children who

find it challenging to make and keep friends are more likely to drop out of school and have mental issues like aggression and depression as teenagers. Those who can effectively navigate social situations have less anxiety and greater self-confidence, notes Kristen Eastman, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist at the Center for Pediatric Behavioral Health at the Cleveland Clinic Children's Hospital.



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This is the way a successful playdate should look.

While most kids start forging friendships on their own when they start school, even the most outgoing children will face social challenges at some point. Preschoolers are still developing the ability to share things and play nicely with others, which often leads to conflicts, and early grade-schoolers can be selfish, bossy, and exclusionary. If your child is having a hard time breaking into a group or getting along with her peers, she may need your help—though how (and how much) you should intervene depends on the particular dilemma. We've rounded up some common kid complaints and suggested solutions.

➔ "I don't have anyone to play with."

WHY IT HAPPENS Unlike toddlers, who are perfectly content to play solo, preschoolers prefer the company of others. But they may feel awkward asking if they can help build a block tower or jump into a game of hopscotch. "Some kids

worry that they might be rejected if they ask to join other children who are in the middle of an activity," says Carol Baicker-McKee, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist and author of *The Preschooler Problem Solver*.

SMART STRATEGY Reassure your child that even grown-ups can feel nervous when approaching people they don't know—but that there are ways to make it easier. Teach her this three-step process, do some role playing at home, and then take her to a park for a test run:

1. Stand close to a group of kids and watch what they're playing for a few minutes.
2. Once she's figured it out (they're playing house, for example), think about what the game might need (a puppy, perhaps?). If there are teams, see which one has fewer players or could use some help.
3. Ask to join in ("That looks like fun. Can I play too?"). Coach your child to smile and make eye contact so the other kids are more receptive to including her.

RECOMMENDED READING *Will I Have a Friend?* by Miriam Cohen. In this timeless kids' title, a shy kindergartner finally overcomes his new-school jitters when he befriends a boy and joins a group.

➔ "He's always telling me what to do."

WHY IT HAPPENS Some kids are natural leaders, others are followers, and the majority are somewhere in between. Assertive types (who tend to gravitate toward passive kids) may butt heads with those who have an equally strong personality and may not consider the effects of their pushy ways on others.

SMART STRATEGY Help your child to find a middle ground between being bossy and being pushed around. Offer a simple script he can use, such as "I don't want to play that. I want to do this instead." He needs to suggest a specific alternative so his friend knows he'll stand up for himself. If the idea of challenging his pal makes him apprehensive, encourage him to channel a brave character he admires, such as the elephant in *Horton Hears a Who*. "Pretending to be an imaginary character makes a child less self-conscious about taking control," says Dr. Baicker-McKee.

RECOMMENDED READING *A Weekend With Wendell*, by Kevin Henkes. Sophie resents her pushy pal Wendell until she learns how to assert herself with him. Then the two have a blast together.

➔ "When Ella plays with Mia, they leave me out!"

WHY IT HAPPENS Toddlers aren't very particular about whom they play with, but kids develop a stronger sense of their likes and dislikes by preschool and into kindergarten. They're also discovering that they can control others by using their words. Sue Sando, of Lansing, Michigan,



“ I’VE NEVER UNDERSTOOD
WHY MY HUMAN WON’T LEAVE THE
HOUSE WITHOUT HER LEASH.
I THINK SHE’S AFRAID OF GETTING
LOST. BUT IT’S OK, I KIND OF LIKE
SHOWING HER AROUND. ”

—HARPER
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remembers when her daughter, Michelle, came home in tears after her two closest pals told her, “We don’t like you. You’re not our friend anymore.” Indeed, three is often a crowd with girls. A study published in *Child Development* found that girls ages 3 to 5 tend to prefer one-on-one play, whereas boys the same age veer toward groups.

SMART STRATEGY When your child is on a playdate with two or more kids, try to steer her toward group activities to break the ice, such as an art project or a game of hide-and-seek. Often these structured starts lead to more natural, harmonious playtime later on. Or, as Sando did, ask your child’s teacher to recommend someone with similar interests who might be a good playdate match for her.

RECOMMENDED READING *This Is Our House*, by Michael Rosen.

George won’t let anyone else at the playground into his cardboard house until the tables are turned and he learns how it feels to be the one who’s excluded.

➔ **“He never wants to play what I want to play.”**

WHY IT HAPPENS Young kids can be remarkably self-centered. They fixate on what they want at any given moment and have a hard time negotiating or problem-solving.

SMART STRATEGY If a playdate turns into a conflict, don’t jump in right away. Give the kids a chance to work it out on their own, since it’s important for them to learn how to navigate typical relationship dilemmas. If they’re unable to work it out, prompt them to brainstorm ways to settle their dispute. You might say something like, “How about playing Danny’s game for ten

minutes and then playing Brian’s?” Or ask if they can come up with another option. If these efforts fail, have the kids take a pause and shift gears. Give them a healthy snack, let them run around the backyard to blow off some steam, and, if necessary, have them play in separate areas for a while.

RECOMMENDED READING *Luka’s Quilt*, by Georgia Guback. When Luka’s grandmother decides to make a Hawaiian quilt for her, the two disagree over its colors and have to work out a compromise.

➔ **“When James comes over to our house, my dumb little brother hogs all of his attention.”**

WHY IT HAPPENS It’s common for a younger sibling to intrude on a playdate, and your older child’s friend may enjoy how easy it is to lead

Two irresistible flavors



around a little sib. Or it could simply be the dynamic on a particular day: Your older child may be intent on his Legos while the other two boys want to play Beyblades.

SMART STRATEGY If your younger child is old enough, try to schedule a simultaneous playdate for him. Otherwise, do your best to keep him busy with other activities. If you can't separate him, encourage your older kid to join them, or come up with ideas for an activity everyone might enjoy next ("Maybe James would like to go on the swings once he's done with their game").

RECOMMENDED READING *The Big Alfie and Annie Rose Storybook*, by Shirley Hughes. In one chapter of this collection, Alfie's friend comes over and ends up hanging out with Alfie's little sister, Annie Rose. Alfie must learn to overcome his feelings of disappointment.



Beyond the BFF

Your child and her pal are practically joined at the hip. They have special nicknames and a private handshake. At school they pair up in line, at lunch, and at recess. Is that a problem?

Not necessarily. "A best friend is a wonderful thing," says Dr. Fred Frankel. Numerous studies confirm that having a long-lasting friendship boosts a child's security and self-esteem and helps buffer the impact of stressful events, like starting at a new school. Even spats between two friends can be constructive, since they'll force them to develop problem-solving skills that will come in handy down the road with a spouse, a boss, and their own kids.

That said, you don't want your child's singular friendship to become so intense that she cuts off other peers. Relying exclusively on one buddy isn't healthy—kids can grow apart, and your child needs someone else to fall back on. While there's no need to "break them up," encourage her to make other friends and play in bigger groups more often. "It's important for your child to have a few kids with whom she feels some sense of intimacy," says Dr. Carol Baicker-McKee.

under 200 calories.

I don't like the way people are looking at us.



I better be getting paid overtime for this.





great plates

From the hundreds of options at America's biggest sit-down and fast-casual chains, these kids' meals stand out for their higher-quality ingredients, creative use of fruits, vegetables, or whole grains, and reasonable levels of sodium and fat.

by KAREN CICERO

➔ Carrabba's Whole-Grain Spaghetti With Spinach

220 calories, 3g fat, 463mg sodium

Even picky eaters won't be able to detect that this pasta is whole grain—it's not dark-looking or dense-tasting. It's tossed with steamed spinach and tomato sauce that's made in the restaurants daily. (241 locations in 31 states)

➔ Panera Bread's Kids Garden Vegetable Soup With Pesto

90 calories, 4g fat, 560mg sodium without a side

The chain expanded its kids' menu last year, adding child-size 8-fluid-

ounce portions of its popular soups. This tomato-based creation contains zucchini, Swiss chard, yellow beans, cauliflower, bell peppers, and barley. It's topped with nut-free basil pesto. Kids can choose from squeezable organic yogurt, an apple, a roll, or a baguette as a side. Panera offers an ingredients list for its dishes online and has pledged to eliminate artificial colors by next year. (1,800-plus locations in 45 states)

➔ Bonefish Grill's Grilled Tilapia

240 calories, 14g fat, 557mg sodium with green beans
Three ounces of lightly seasoned fresh tilapia—flown in several

times weekly—is wood-grilled and served with a side of steamed green beans tossed in olive oil. While kids are waiting for their meal, they can doodle on the craft-paper tabletops. (200 locations in 37 states)

➔ Hard Rock Cafe's Chillin' With Chicken Salad

330 calories, 10g fat, 500mg sodium without dressing

A mix of chopped lettuces, shredded cheese, chicken cubes, and carrot sticks served on a guitar-shaped plate, this new salad rocks. Your kid's choice of two dressings (like honey mustard and ranch) is poured into slots within the plate for dipping. (47 locations in 27 states)



You can't
beat the kids'
salad at
the Hard Rock
Cafe.



Cosi's cheese pizza is great finger food.

➔ TGI Friday's All-Natural Chicken Sandwich

320 calories, 17g fat, 410mg sodium without a side
The chain recently switched to chicken without growth hormones, which it marinates in lemon juice, olive oil, and garlic. Served on a special bun for gluten-sensitive kids, this sandwich comes with a choice of sides. Opt for the fruit cup, typically a mix of strawberries, pineapple, and mandarin oranges. (500-plus locations in 41 states)

➔ Jason's Deli's J.D. Nugetz

170 calories, 6g fat, 480mg sodium without a side
Made exclusively for the chain, four antibiotic-free, cornmeal-coated chicken fingers come with organic apple slices or organic baby carrots and choice of a drink, such as an organic-milk box. (250-plus locations in 29 states)

➔ Cosi's Kids Flatbread Pizza

250 calories, 10g fat, 395mg sodium without a side
The secret to this healthy pizza is in the crust: flatbread baked daily in

the chain's brick oven. What's more, the pizza is customizable. Add veggies or a protein, skip the cheese, opt for whole-grain flatbread, use pesto instead of tomato sauce—it's all possible. It arrives at your table cut into small rectangles, making it easier for little ones to eat. Your kid can decide between a mixed-fruit cup or baby carrots for the side. (108 locations in 17 states)

➔ Uno Pizzeria & Grill's Pick-A-Pasta

300 calories, 3g fat, 280mg sodium for penne with tomato sauce
Kids can choose their pasta shape, type of sauce, favorite veggies (like broccoli or mushrooms), and even ask for chicken to create a custom bowl of yumminess. If your kid skips veggies, he'll still get some anyway—there are carrots and onions in the tomato sauce. (140-plus locations in 24 states)

➔ Zoës Kitchen's Chicken Salad Sandwich

440 calories, 25g fat, 620mg sodium for sandwich only
A smaller, crustless version of a regular menu item, this sandwich is

filled with chicken salad—made in-house from white-meat chicken, mayo, celery, and seasonings. It's served with orange wedges. (131 locations in 15 states)

➔ Mimi's Cafe's Turkey Dinner

220 calories, 6g fat, 730mg sodium without a side
It can always be Thanksgiving for kids at this chain, which serves house-roasted turkey with stuffing and gravy (use just half of the gravy to scale back on 150 milligrams of sodium). The kids' meal includes apple slices or steamed broccoli. (107 locations in 18 states)

➔ Red Robin's Chick on a Stick

136 calories, 2g fat, 398mg sodium without dip or sides
Plain grilled chicken breast? Blah. Grilled chicken pieces on an ice-pop stick? Fun! The chain serves three chicken sticks with a choice of dipping sauce (request the light ranch rather than the regular one) plus a choice of a side. (500-plus locations in 38 states)

➔ Ruby Tuesday's Create Your Own Garden Bar

The chain's popular salad bar is actually one of the entrées on the kids' menu—and little ones can make a meal out of it. It features protein-rich lettuce toppers (like hard-boiled eggs and turkey ham) plus fun choices (shredded Parmesan and sunflower seeds). Kids can snag finger foods too, such as edamame and pepper strips with light ranch dip. (750 locations in 45 states)

➔ Red Lobster's Snow Crab Legs

90 calories, 1g fat, 790mg sodium without a side
They're a smaller version of a popular adult-menu item. Kids receive a half pound of wild-caught snow crab

breakfast is better with the bunny

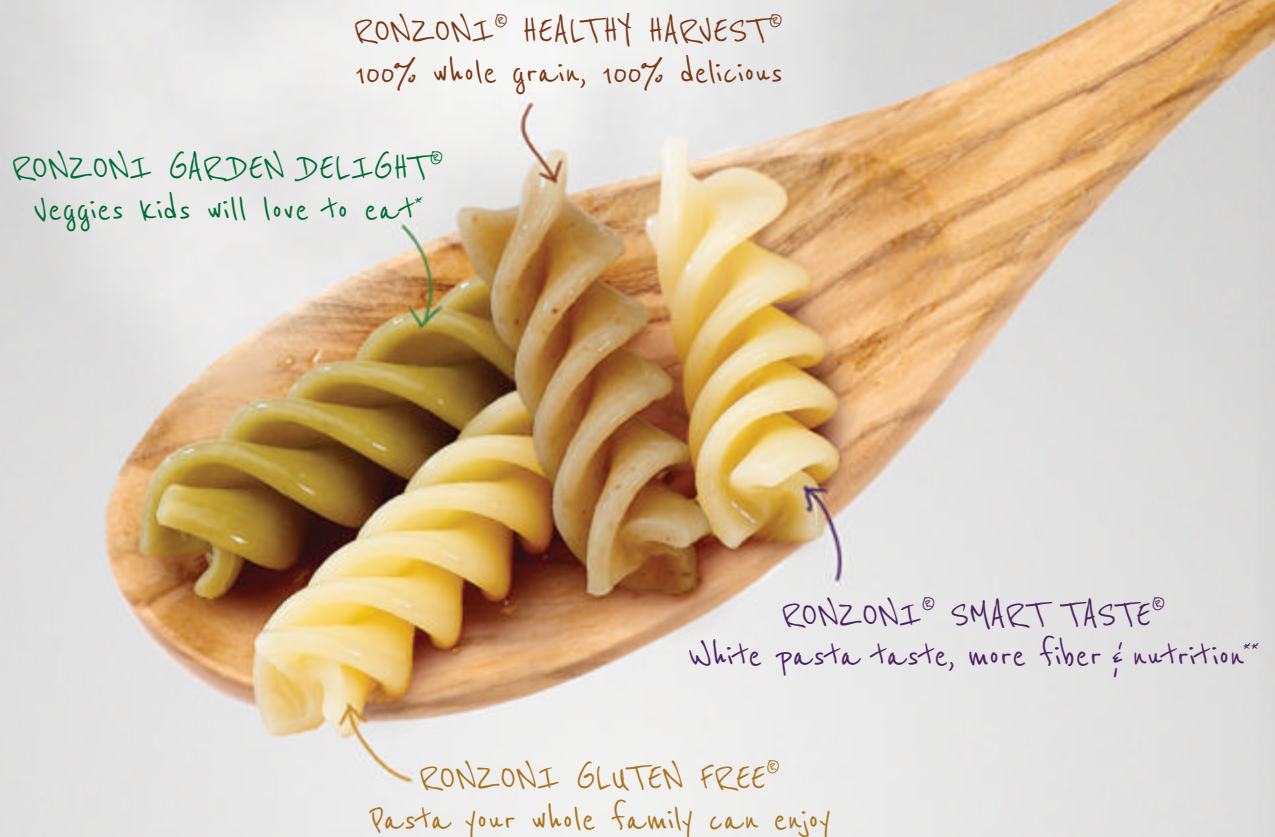
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legs along with orange wedges or steamed broccoli. Although the meal's sodium content seems a little high, don't sweat it; much of it occurs naturally in the crab legs, which are a great source of other hard-to-find minerals. (705 locations in 48 states)

➔ **Lyfe Kitchen's Tofu Taco**

289 calories, 14g fat, 506mg sodium without a side
This chain, known for a wide selection of vegetarian and vegan choices, offers a kid's taco filled with marinated tofu, veggie slaw, and avocado wrapped in a warm corn tortilla. It comes with a side of baked sweet-potato fries or fruit. (15 locations in 6 states)

➔ **Houlihan's Mini Cheeseburger**

317 calories, 17g fat, 541mg sodium without a side
Creekstone Farms, where no antibiotics or growth hormones are used, supplies the beef for this small burger served on a brioche roll. Opt for fresh fruit or pineapple brown rice as a side. Plus, kids receive carrots and light ranch dip to start the meal. (77 locations in 20 states)

➔ **P.F. Chang's Sweet & Sour Chicken**

300 calories, 11g fat, 400mg sodium without sides
Antibiotic-free chicken is used to make this dish, which is served with brown rice and the sauce on the side for dipping. If you want to avoid the breading on the chicken, ask to substitute steamed chicken. Order an extra side of veggies for your kids. (200-plus locations in 25 states)

➔ **Rubio's The Original Fish Taco**

310 calories, 20g fat, 350mg sodium without sides
Sustainable wild Alaskan pollack is battered, topped with cabbage and

sour cream-based sauce, and wrapped in a non-GMO corn tortilla. If your child will eat fish that isn't fried, ask to substitute grilled mahimahi or tilapia. Kids can pick two sides from choices such as applesauce, rice, and black beans. (190 locations in 5 states)

➔ **Chipotle's Two Taco Kit**

380 calories, 16g fat, 350mg sodium
This chain, known for its support of local farmers, allows kids to choose three fillings, including one meat (all of the choices are antibiotic-free) to fill up two taco shells. The nutrition info is for two crispy corn tacos with steak, veggies, and cheese plus kid-size chips. (1,800 locations in 40-plus states)

➔ **Moe's Southwest Grill's Moo Moo Mr. Cow**

257 calories, 11g fat, 404mg sodium
Kids can choose their own ingredients—from grass-fed beef to all-natural chicken, mushrooms to bell peppers—for the chain's child-size burrito that's rolled in a flour tortilla. (The nutrition info is for one with chicken, black beans, lettuce, pico de gallo, and cheese.) The meal also includes tortilla chips and salsa, a kid-size drink, and a cookie. (582 locations in 37 states)

➔ **True Food Kitchen's Almond Butter, Apple, and Banana Sandwich**

365 calories, 19g fat, 113mg sodium without a side
You won't go wrong with anything on the children's menu at this restaurant cofounded by health guru Dr. Andrew Weil, but this creamy and crunchy whole-grain sammie is a popular pick. It's served with carrot sticks with a side of tzatziki for dipping. Ingredients are seasonally and locally sourced. (10 locations in 6 states) ✕



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Counting apples
each day could keep
the tutor away.



making math fun

Even if you're not a numbers person yourself, you can help your child develop stronger skills—and a positive attitude. **by LESLIE GARISTO PFAFF**

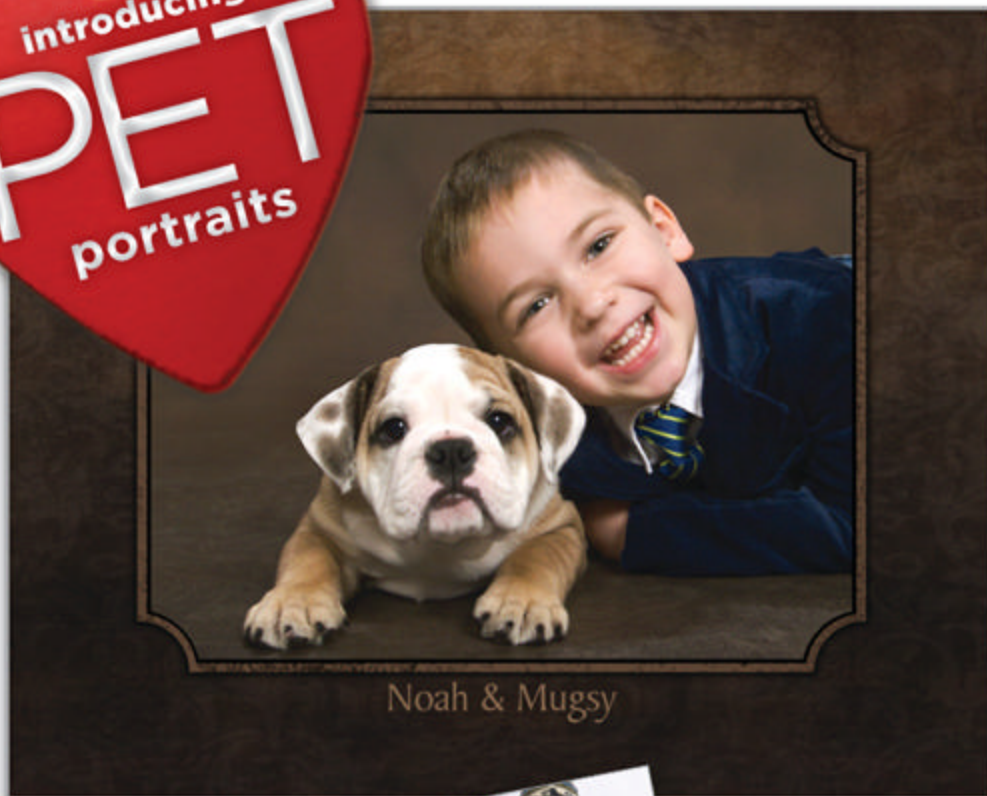
WHAT do an engineer, a graphic designer, a biologist, and a business administrator have in common? They all work in professions that require a solid educational grounding in mathematics. In fact, each of the top 20 jobs on the U.S.

Bureau of Labor Statistics' current list of highest-paying occupations value numerical literacy, and by the time our children are ready to enter the workforce, professions that are related to STEM (an acronym for science, technology, engineering,

and math) are predicted to be even more predominant.

Unfortunately, though, too many children still struggle mightily with mathematics. In international student-assessment rankings of math skills, American kids trail

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not only their peers from Japan and Taiwan but also those from Estonia, Iceland, and Vietnam. A study from the University of California, Irvine, found that children who struggle with math in elementary school are 29 percent less likely to attend college than those who are proficient in it. And, sadly, the majority of our students are floundering: A report by the ACT testing service shows that only 44 percent of high-school grads are actually prepared to take college-level math.

Certainly, American schools bear a large share of the blame. Districts have tried numerous approaches over the years to improve math skills—from abstract theories, to intensive drills, to the current reform-math trend, which emphasizes conceptual understanding and multiple ways of solving a single problem. For instance, kids may learn to subtract from left to right as well as right to left. When dividing 87 by 3, they are taught to guesstimate using multiplication factors of 10 (i.e., $3 \times 10 = 30$; another $3 \times 10 = 30$; add them up and you get 60; subtract that from 87, which leaves 27) rather than simply seeing how many times 3 goes into 8 (2) and carrying the 2. None of these strategies, though, have reversed our kids' low worldwide ranking in the subject.

A common criticism of popular grade-school curricula today is that they skip around from topic to topic, making it more difficult for kids to fully comprehend ideas. The top-selling elementary-level math textbooks emphasize definitions and formulas, whereas those used in high-achieving countries focus on the importance of building a deeper understanding of math principles.

In recent years, a growing number of schools around the country have adopted Singapore math, which is based on the curriculum for grades

1 through 6 that has helped the island nation place at or near the top in worldwide mathematics rankings in recent surveys. "This performance in math didn't happen by accident," says Char Forsten, coauthor of *Math Strategies You Can Count On* and a consultant for Staff Development for Educators, which helps train teachers in Singapore math. In the 1970s, Singapore students were actually low-performing in the subject. The reversal was the result of a revamped approach that devotes more time to fewer topics, with a concrete sequence of instruction

and the use of model drawing, which help students to fully grasp the math they are learning.

A study by the nonprofit American Institutes for Research concluded that Singapore's math approach is superior to others used in U.S. schools. Still, districts that have switched to it without careful planning have faced myriad challenges and frustrations. Those that have experienced greater success have invested in teacher training and displayed patience, as the radically different method takes roughly six to eight years to really pay off (as it did in Singapore).

skill builders

Check out these multimedia resources for helping young kids become more comfortable with math.



➔ Games

Dominoes The perfect hands-on tool for preschoolers to learn about matching and basic counting. *3 years and up*
Set A challenging card game (even adults like it) that helps children hone their memory and observation skills and recognize patterns. *6 years and up, \$18; amazon.com*



➔ Books

Shapes, Shapes, Shapes, by Tana Hoban. In a series of beautiful photographs, the author points out the interesting shapes all around us. *3 years and up*
Inch by Inch, by Leo Lionni. The charming inchworm illustrations in this Caldecott Honor book will help familiarize kids with measurement. *3 years and up*



➔ Websites

Early Math You'll find games and resources to help kids 2 and up develop math skills. pbs.org/parents/earlymath
Math Cats Kids will love the number-related art projects, crafts, and calculators (one can tell you how old you are in days, hours, minutes, or seconds). mathcats.com



➔ Apps

Cute Math Simple graphics and silly sounds keep preschoolers entertained as they work on addition and subtraction basics. \$2; iPad, iPhone, iPod touch
Math Bingo A fun way for kids 4 and up to practice math facts at their level. \$2 for iPad and iPhone; \$1 for Android



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Meanwhile, policy makers are attempting to address our collective math problem. Common Core, a series of nationwide assessments that are aligned with higher standards and designed to help our kids compete on the global stage, is one possible solution. However, it doesn't address the need for more teacher training. That's why President Obama requested \$3.1 billion in the 2014 budget to improve our nation's STEM education. "To thrive in a global economy we need to attract people with strong math and science backgrounds into teaching, train them to teach well, and hold on to them," says *Parents* advisor Deborah Stipek, Ph.D., author of *Motivated Minds: Raising Children to Love Learning*.

Whether or not these government initiatives will prove successful remains to be seen, particularly in light of the math phobia that seems so pervasive here. Whereas the

* Toddlers are hardwired to understand basic math concepts.

Chinese view doing calculations as a skill that anyone can master, we tend to accept that it's a talent that you either have ... or you don't. In fact, even the college-educated among us seem to be perfectly comfortable saying, "I can't do math." Can you imagine those same folks saying, "I can't do reading"?

Worse, we may be projecting our own math discomfort onto our kids. In a PBS survey, one third of moms admitted that they were anxious about teaching number skills to their children. "While we definitely need to improve the overall quality of math education in this country, an important first step is getting children comfortable with number concepts from a

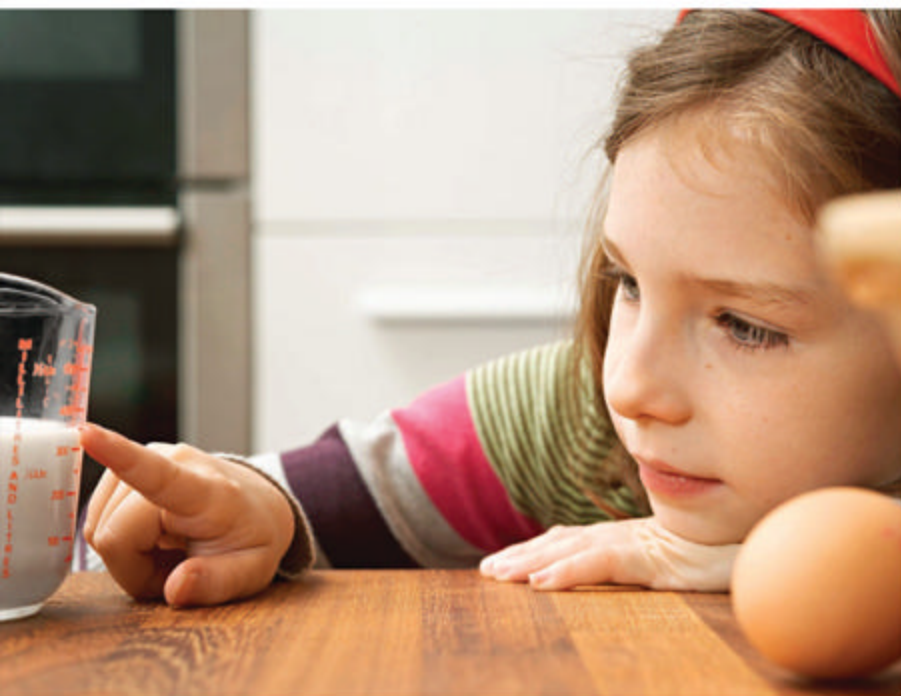
young age," says Nancy Jordan, Ph.D., professor of education at the University of Delaware, in Newark. To make sure that happens with your child, take these steps.

➔ **Be playful.** Solving problems requires mastering a core of skills, including grouping, classifying, and counting; recognizing numerals, shapes, and patterns; and even some basic geometry. Fortunately, your child is hardwired to begin to understand these concepts by age 2, according to Roberta Schomburg, Ph.D., associate dean in the School of Education at Carlow University, in Pittsburgh.

You can tap into that natural aptitude by giving your toddler cardboard boxes of different sizes and letting her see which objects (such as a rubber ball, stuffed animals, and squishy toys) fit into each. Boost her spatial sense by having her build with blocks and play with a shape sorter. Or find another way to teach geometry. Rachel Teichman, from Oakland, California, uses waffles. "I show 3-year-old Nina that a round waffle isn't just a circle," she says. "You can find squares and rectangles, cut it into triangles, and create new shapes as you take bites from it."

When your kid is a little older, try showing her two groups of black dots. Then let her estimate which has more. This exercise engages a child's number sense, according to a recent study published in the journal *Cognition*.

➔ **Turn your kitchen into a math classroom.** Have your child count the eggs as you crack them into a bowl, or ask him to help you pour (and measure) 2 cups of milk, suggests Donna Adelmund, an early-education teacher at the University of Northern Iowa Child Development Center, in Cedar Falls. Point out the numbers in a recipe,

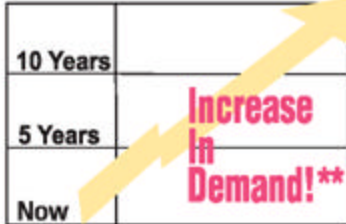


A measuring cup makes lessons about quantity clearer.

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A+ Rating



How many blocks can he stack before they topple?

and show him how to set the kitchen timer. You can even try teaching him about simple fractions. “I let my kids, ages 2 and 4, choose whether they want to have their sandwiches cut into halves or quarters,” says Caroline Mukisa, of Cambridge, Massachusetts. “Then we count the total number of pieces.”

➔ **Embrace the arts.** The rhythm of dancing makes it a great activity to promote counting. Have your child show off different steps as she recites the numbers. “Or create patterns like ‘March four times, and then hop four times,’” suggests Dr. Stipek. Drawing and painting help instill math skills too. Encourage your child to create a variety of shapes on a page or on a canvas, and then show her how they

can serve as the basis for a detailed image: A circle can become a face, while a rectangle can be turned into a house or a window. Point out the defining features of different shapes—triangles have three lines, while rectangles have four.

➔ **Make the concepts real.**

Holding up a flash card and saying, “This is a two” won’t get your kid excited about numbers. Instead, show him a bowl of chocolate candies, and ask him to count out two for dessert. You can turn your child’s anticipation of a special event into a math tutorial. When Cheryl Wu’s 4-year-old son, Koi, asked what day they were going to the science museum, the New York City mom told him Saturday. Then she had him count the days until the trip on his

fingers. Let an older kid work on addition and subtraction by playing with money. Dump some change on a table, review the value of each coin, and challenge him to see how many ways he can add up to a dollar.

➔ **Become a numbers booster.**

If you make statements such as, “Hey, I was never good at math, and I still turned out okay,” you’re setting your child up for failure. Instead, look for ways to make your comments sound positive and encouraging (“See, you even use numbers when you’re playing hopscotch”), says Dr. Stipek.

➔ **Focus on games.** Find ways to practice addition and subtraction that don’t involve drilling. Board games such as Chutes and Ladders are an excellent way to cement arithmetic skills, says Dr. Jordan. Or use a deck of cards to make up your own math games. Try playing War with each of you using two cards at a time, and adding them up to see who has the bigger total. Not only will this improve your child’s calculation skills, but it also helps convey the idea that math is fun.

➔ **Act like a student as well as a teacher.**

Try to develop a new appreciation for math as your child studies it in grade school. “If you learn it over again with her, you may start liking it more,” says Jo Boaler, Ph.D., author of *What’s Math Got to Do With It?: How Parents and Teachers Can Help Children Learn to Love Their Least Favorite Subject*. Addition and multiplication are now taught using different methods than the ones we were taught. Looking through your child’s textbook or attending school math workshops for parents will equip you to offer help if she needs it. Even better: When she masters a new step, ask her to teach you. She’ll love the role reversal. ✕

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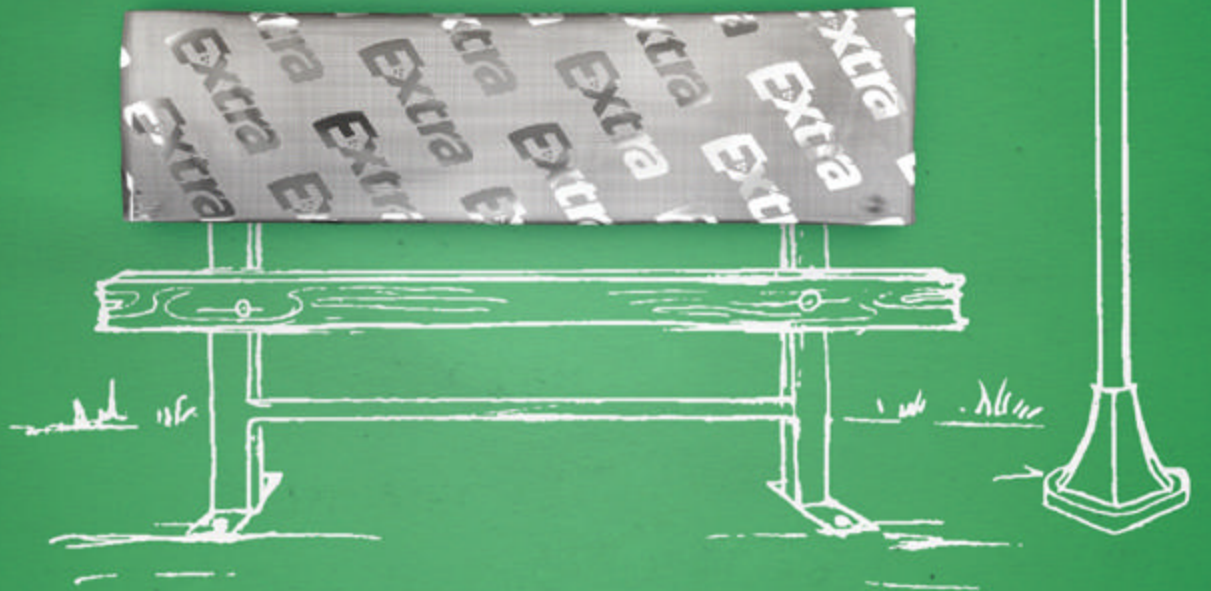


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Chubby pencils for cheeks, lips, and eyes are on point for spring.

by DEVON ABELMAN



↓ OUR LINEUP

Luminous Lift

Charlotte Tilbury Colour
Chameleon Colour
Morphing Eye Shadow
Pencil in Champagne
Diamonds. \$26;
charlottetilbury.com

High Definition

Nudestix Eye Pencil
in Pewter. \$24;
us.spacenk.com

Good Hydration

Shea Moisture
Lip Crayon in Sarah.
\$10; target.com

New Sensation

Vintage by Jessica
Liebeskind Velvet
Lip Crayon in Pink Lily.
\$22; jessicaliebeskind.com

Instant Brightener

Sephora Collection
Brow Enhancer
in Matte Light Pink.
\$10; sephora.com

Enduring Effect

Rimmel London Lasting
Finish Colour Rush Lip
Balm in Drive Me Nude.
\$5; walmart.com

Royal Flush

Clinique Chubby Stick
Cheek Colour Balm
in Plumped Up Peony.
\$21; clinique.com

Undercover Agent

Japonesque Color
Correcting Crayon
in Lilac. \$22; ulta.com



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I love being a mom—but I don't always have time to fuss with my hair. That's why I'm always on the lookout for products that make my hair look and feel great, every day.

— Kristin C.,
Mom of 2 and *Parents* reader



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Take a break from ponytails to help hair stay healthy.

hold on to fabulous hair

Expert advice for how to get your hair to look as healthy and full as when you were pregnant

by TRACY PEREZ

WORRIED ABOUT getting thin in the wrong places? Join the club. Second only to wrinkles, hair loss is the biggest aging concern among millennial women, according to a recent Elizabeth Arden study. Noticing that your hair doesn't look and feel as full as it used to can

be even more crushing if you were lucky enough to experience one particular perk of pregnancy: shiny, thick, voluptuous hair. But try not to stress about it—ironically, that can lead to more hair loss! The good news is that there is plenty you can do to promote the lush look you crave.

1 Be kind to your hair.

Using a brush with soft bristles helps prevent breakage, says Paul Labrecque, a hairstylist in New York City and Philadelphia. We're fans of The Wet Brush (\$9; thewetbrush.com), which can be used on just-washed hair to detangle because of its thin, flexible bristles. Soft-fabric ponytail holders, such as Goody Ouchless Elastics (\$5; target.com), also reduce tearing and snagging.

2 Never skip conditioner.

It builds elasticity and adds hydration, both of which are key to healthy growth. Once a week, trade your regular conditioner for a deep conditioning treatment. Kérastase Densifique Masque Densité (\$62.50; kerastase-usa.com) goes on like a light gel and rinses clean.

3 Consider a supplement.

Biotin is a B vitamin that supports the body's production of keratin, the protein responsible for strengthening hair and nails. Biotin supplements, such as Vitafusion Extra Strength Biotin (\$12; amazon.com), are available in drugstores. If you're pregnant, nursing, or trying to conceive, get your doc's okay before starting any type of supplement.



chunk.



Thicker cookies with chunkier chocolate chunks is the answer. The question doesn't matter.



1. Brush With Greatness Available in three shades, **Satin Sugar Rush Brush** (\$22; amazon.com) deposits the perfect amount of tinted dry shampoo to refresh hair while creating an illusion of density. It hides grays too!

2. Supportive Shampoo After just one wash, **Nexus New York Salon Care Diametress Shampoo** (\$12; drugstore.com) works to increase the diameter of individual strands by up to 17 percent through a potent blend of plumping ingredients including green-tea extract and panthenol.

3. Hair-Enhancing Elixir Once a week for three weeks, add an ampoule of **L'Oréal Paris Advanced Haircare Volume Filler Fiber Amplifying Concentrate In-Shower Treatment** (\$7; walgreens.com) to your conditioner and leave it on for two minutes. Your hair will immediately blow-dry with more bounce and shine. By the end of Week 3, it should feel noticeably thicker.

4. Mega-Lift Mist For instant volume, spray a product like **Pantene Pro-V PowerFULL Body Booster Spray** (\$5; pgestore.com) onto damp hair at the roots.

when hair loss is a red flag

If you're experiencing excessive shedding (more than 100 hairs per day)—especially if it's combined with fatigue, insomnia, irritability, or nervousness—see your doctor ASAP. It could be ...

➔ A thyroid problem

In addition to significant hair loss and fatigue, heart palpitations and a sudden intolerance to heat are telltale signs of this hormonal imbalance, says New York City dermatologist **Marnie Nussbaum, M.D.**

➔ **Poor diet** Hair loss from anemia—a condition caused by an iron deficiency—is common because busy moms often struggle to find time to eat proper meals. Iron transfers oxygen into the blood; when your body lacks this vital nutrient, it goes into survival mode, channeling oxygen only to the body's major organs, not your hair.

➔ **Stress** Constant worries, lack of sleep, a severe illness like the flu, or a traumatic life event all fall under the umbrella of stress, which can manifest itself as hair loss. It's common for the onset of stress-induced hair loss to happen up to three months after the initial trigger. The cruel joke: Seeing your hair fall out fuels more stress. Talk to your doctor about the best way to manage it. Maybe it's medication. Maybe it's yoga.

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“I don’t let things get me down.”

A mom with MS takes us through a day in her unpredictable life. by KARA CORRIDAN

HERE’S ONE from The Obvious Files: Parenthood is hard. But for some mothers and fathers, the challenges are more relentless. Single parents fall into this category. So do moms and dads whose children have special needs. And so do a group we don’t hear much about: parents who themselves have a disability. There are more than 4 million of them, according to research conducted at University of California, San Francisco.

Verena Cristofaro-Frydberg, 36, a mother of two children, ages 5 and 6, was diagnosed at age 21 with multiple sclerosis (MS). Most people with MS experience their first symptoms between the ages of 20

and 40. The cause of MS is unknown, but it drives the immune system to damage parts of the brain and spinal cord and interfere with nerve signals between the brain and different parts of the body. As a result, those with MS may experience vision problems, walking difficulties, muscle stiffness, dizziness, numbness, bladder and bowel problems, and pain. Many with MS go undiagnosed, so its prevalence is difficult to pinpoint. According to the National MS Society, it’s believed to affect more than 400,000 people in the U.S.

Verena, who lives in New City, New York, has relapsing-remitting MS, the most common form of the disease. Her symptoms were

almost nonexistent until her first pregnancy, with her daughter, Olivia, in 2007. She experienced pins and needles in the soles of her feet and at one point couldn’t walk because her ankle kept giving out. During delivery, after an epidural, her right leg went completely numb, but then it returned to normal. In 2009, when she was in labor with her son, Stephen, an epidural again left her with no sensation—this time permanently.

Her MS symptoms have since worsened, but she tries hard to focus on what she can do. Blending her background in the entertainment, fashion, and beauty industries, Verena started a nonprofit called Makeover Your MS, dedicated to

Verena Cristofaro-Frydberg
shares a snuggle
with her daughter, Olivia, 6,
and her son, Stephen, 5.



↑ Olivia's favorite hairbrushes are stashed throughout the house so Verena doesn't have to go upstairs to the bathroom to get them.



↑ In addition to these breakfast foods for the kids, Verena has a mini fridge in her bedroom so they can eat without going downstairs.



↑ "I keep cereal, bowls, and spoons in a place where the kids can reach them so they can serve themselves," explains Verena.



↑ Verena keeps this pill organizer in her bedroom. She takes at least nine pills every day in order to manage her MS.



↑ It's most difficult for Verena to climb stairs in the early morning, before her muscles have had a chance to warm up.



↑ Bulk shopping and extreme organization are key: Verena buys everything from toilet paper to birthday presents ahead of time.

empowering women through programs that build self-esteem and enhance their quality of life. “I don’t let things get me down,” explains Verena, who is recently divorced. “Sometimes I have a ‘woe-is-me’ moment, but then I’m like, ‘Hey, Keep it moving.’” She graciously allowed me to join her on what passes as a “typical” day.

6:30 a.m. Verena wakes up and reaches for her pill organizer. She also stretches and uses a muscle massager to warm up her joints before she gets up. “I can’t just pop out of bed,” she says. What happens if one of her children calls out to her during the night? “It takes me a while to get there because I have to be careful not to fall,” she explains.

7:00 a.m. The family’s au pair starts her workday and enters Verena’s bright, spacious bedroom. Live-in child care is a must: “If my son runs out the door, I physically can’t chase him,” she says. “He once climbed out the window—thank God he

was in the basement. But that’s why I want a one-level house.”

Conserving energy and movement is a theme in Verena’s life. It’s the reason she has toothbrushes, toothpaste, and flossers in each of the three bathrooms in her home. And why she makes her kids’ beds with three layers of mattress pads and sheets. “This way, if a kid’s throwing up or wets the bed, I’m not remaking it—I just have to pull off a sheet and a mattress pad.”

She recalls when her symptoms started taking over her life. It was when her mother had a stroke, after Stephen was born. “I was flying back and forth to Michigan to see her, I had a baby and a 1-year-old, and I was so stressed.” Around that time, Verena lost all core strength.

Her divorce has been another grueling experience, but she thinks of the stress as a wake-up call to focus on herself and not let her symptoms worsen. She started going to Pilates two or three times a week. “At first, my foot was so stiff that I couldn’t move it. It was

like a brick,” she says. Pause. “When I was younger I was so athletic—cheerleading, everything ... I used to be so *fast*.” Her voice trails off.

9:00 a.m. We pile into the car. Verena stocks it with the items she uses all day long, including baby wipes, straws (hand weakness can make it hard to lift a cup or a bottle), a roll of plastic diaper garbage bags to keep the car tidy, and a huge container of nuts.

9:23 a.m. Arriving at Olivia and Stephen’s school, Verena asks

How to Help a Parent With a Disability

Ask what you can do, suggests psychologist Rosalind Kalb, Ph.D., vice president of clinical care for the National MS Society. A straightforward “I hope you’ll let me know if there’s any way I can help you” is a good place to start; from

her au pair to bring the kids inside, because it takes too long for her to get to the classrooms. Today Stephen will start a new afternoon program, where he'll get services for the problems he's had lately, due in large part to his parents' divorce. "He's getting help for his attention issues," Verena explains. "The emotional stuff has gotten better, now that all the transitions at home have stopped for the moment."

9:33 a.m. We're at Dunkin' Donuts. "I use a drive-through wherever I can," Verena says. "Me trying to walk with a cup of coffee is not pretty."

↓ The Pilates instructor, Shantih, understands Verena's challenges. "My father had MS. I feel like she came to me for a reason."



10:05 a.m. We slowly navigate the narrow aisles at Back to Earth, a small natural-foods store; Verena makes her selections. She orders as much produce online as she can from Peapod, but she also relies on premade and packaged foods from this local market. At the checkout, Verena watches the cashier pack the bags. Before loading them into her cart, she removes a few of the items from the first bag. "Too heavy?" the cashier asks, perhaps unaware of Verena's limitations. "A little bit," Verena admits. "Okay, I'll take some stuff out," the cashier replies kindly. Verena handles one

↓ Wearing a neurostimulator, an electrical sensor to stimulate nerves, allows Verena to bend her foot when she walks. It's clunky, but crucial.



bag while the cashier takes care of the other.

Leaving the store, I wonder whether her children talk about her condition. "They'll ask, 'Mommy, when's your leg going to get better?'" "When will you be able to run?" says Verena. "Sometimes they get sad, but they know Mommy has to go slow."

Whereas the average person has a 1 in 750 chance of developing MS, Olivia's and Stephen's risk is 1 in 40. "It really scares me," Verena admits. "Sometimes my son wakes up saying he has 'freezing feet' and I get so frightened," Verena says, because numbness in her own feet had signaled the beginning of her own decline. "But there's nothing I can do to prevent my children from getting MS. I can't give them medicine or increase certain vitamins—we don't know if any of that works. And worrying doesn't change the future; all it does is ruin the present."

11:00 a.m. Verena has a doctor's appointment. She opens the trunk of her car to get her cane. "I don't want to use it—ever—but it lets people know something's wrong." What changed her mind was hearing the story about a friend with MS who attended a professional event without her cane; people assumed from the awkward way she was walking that she was drunk.

So Verena uses her cane, albeit as infrequently as possible. "It's annoying. I have to use it on my stronger side, but then I need to hold my bag on my weaker side, even though I can't really grip it. I need one more hand." To free her hand to hold a cane, she wears a wristlet that contains cash, credit cards, her license, and keys.

As she waits to see the doctor, she recounts her medications. Daily, she takes pills to help relieve muscle spasms, to aid in coordination, to help manage anxiety in the wake of her divorce, and to counteract the constipation caused by all of the

there you can offer more specific assistance. Dr. Kalb recommends offers that take an item off a parent's to-do list, such as:

- ➔ "I'm going to the store. Can I grab a few things for you?"
- ➔ "I love having kids over because it helps me out. Want me to take the children for a bit

so you can try to squeeze in a quick nap?"

- ➔ "I know we're all supposed to help at the book fair. If you're not up to it, would you like me to take your shift?"
- ➔ "I'm making casseroles this weekend. Is it okay for me to drop one off to save you a little work?"

drugs. Once a month, she gets an IV infusion of a medication that can slow the worsening of symptoms and decrease the number of relapses she experiences.

Because she's "perpetually exhausted," she also takes Adderall, most often used by people with ADHD, to combat her fatigue. This begs the question: How on earth did she handle new motherhood? Two words: sleep training. Miraculously, both of her children took to it beautifully; Stephen was sleeping for 12 hours at 6 weeks. "They never cried in their crib. They learned how to entertain themselves."

But when Olivia was 16 months old, Verena realized something wasn't quite right; her daughter had a speech delay and problems transitioning, among other issues. Olivia has since been diagnosed with a mild form of autism spectrum disorder as well as

ADHD. "We have a very structured day for her," Verena explains. "Everything has to come with a two-minute warning."

12:40 p.m. It's time for Verena's private Pilates session, in lieu of traditional physical therapy. "My hand's feeling jammed up," Verena tells her instructor, Shantih. As she struggles during one series of movements, she mutters, "I'm not a good student." Shantih shakes her head: "Verena is a *great* student. She's so hard on herself."

2:03 p.m. We're in the parking lot of the children's school, for a meeting about Olivia. We wait for an elderly man heading to a handicapped parking spot to drive away. There's only one such spot, and the lot is coated with ice and filled with mountains of shoveled snow. "If it's

really cold, I can't bend my knee. I've been stuck sitting in the car for 15 minutes with my leg out the door, just waiting to bend it," she says. "I get dirty looks if I don't get out of the car. Someone once came up and said, 'That's nice: Teach your kids to take the handicapped spot'—and then he saw me get my cane."

Finally, we're parked. Verena walks to the building about 50 feet away, signs in, and climbs the two flights of stairs to the principal's office. She chooses the stairs because the elevator is much farther away. "A lot of places that are handicapped-accessible are good for wheelchairs but not for people who have trouble walking," she notes. "This is why I get fatigued—it takes so long to do everything."

3:00 p.m. Her meeting ends, and her children are dismissed early.

“ I’VE NEVER UNDERSTOOD WHY MY HUMAN WON’T LEAVE THE HOUSE WITHOUT HER LEASH. I THINK SHE’S AFRAID OF GETTING LOST. BUT IT’S OK, I KIND OF LIKE SHOWING HER AROUND. ”

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"Mommy!" Olivia calls out joyfully, running down the hall, all bundled up, as Stephen follows behind. Carefully walking down the hallway with her cane, Verena says softly, "I'm going to fall." Her right side topples into the wall, and she slides down, landing on the floor. "Mommy! Are you okay?" Olivia asks, frightened. Stephen is quiet as two teachers and I help Verena get to her knees. "I'm fine," she insists, slowly standing. "I tripped over my foot."

"You don't want to use a walker?" asks one of the teachers, gently.

"And are you sure you want to take the stairs instead of the elevator?" the other teacher wonders.

"It's actually easier for me to go down the stairs than to walk to the elevator," says Verena. "It's too far."

Once in the car, she shakes her head. "They want to help. They just don't understand that I actually

choose to take the stairs, and will for as long as I am able."

3:52 p.m. Back at the house, a timer sounds. "iPads off!" Verena calls. Olivia goes over her schoolwork at the dining-room table, where Verena finally eats the salad she bought at Back to Earth for lunch.

4:45 p.m. Verena leaves for a divorce-mediation meeting at her attorney's office. It takes three hours, much longer than expected.

9:00 p.m. The au pair has put the children to bed; Verena gives good-night kisses and heads to her room for the night.

Verena and I speak the following week. She tells me went to a friend's wedding, where she served as the makeup artist. Because it became so

difficult to walk around the resort, she rented a wheelchair. "It made things so much easier," she reports, though it wasn't exactly fun when a guest asked if she was the mother of the bride. "The bride is my age! But people sometimes assume that if you're disabled, you're old. You have to have a sense of humor about it."

She also tries to have compassion. "I remember seeing people riding their scooters in the mall, but then arriving at a store and walking in. I'd think, 'They are so lazy. They can walk! They should walk,'" Verena recalls. "Now I understand. They ride a scooter because by the time they get where they're going, they're exhausted. It takes a lot of mental effort too. You're thinking, 'Are people looking at me?' 'Oh my God, I'm going to fall.' It just proves you have no idea what somebody's going through. You really don't know." ✕

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if you ask me... by SABRINA JAMES

Q I'm recently separated but still friends with my soon-to-be ex on Facebook. I can't help but get angry when I see other women commenting on the pictures he posts of himself with my daughter. It almost seems as if he's using his new single-dad status as a way to get attention—and it's totally working! It's making me crazy. Should I unfriend him?

—In Need of Facebook Ex-iquette

Dear In Need,
Staying connected online after a relationship-status change IRL, well, it's complicated, even in the most amicable of separations. It's virtually impossible to avoid those digital drive-bys that start out as an excuse to look at photos of your daughter and end with you falling down a social-media rabbit hole while investigating your ex's latest

Facebook fangirl. Maybe you've had legit reasons for remaining FB friends, like the convenience of keeping tabs on your kid while she's with her father. But your sanity should take priority. Unfriend him and say goodbye to the anger and resentment that are bound to build up, no matter what his intentions may (or may not) be. If you're on good terms, ask your ex to send a picture or two of your little girl when she's with him to get the comfort of seeing her sweet face—without any of the digital drama.

Q I was at the playground with my best friend and our toddlers last week when my daughter tried to grab my friend's cell phone from the bench we were sitting on. My friend slapped her hand and told her no. I was so shocked

that I didn't say anything when it happened. Should I say something now?

—Friend of a Playground Punisher

Dear Friend,

Wow. I know people say "it takes a village" to raise a child, but come on! Only the village idiot would physically discipline someone else's kid. It's not anyone's place—friend, family, or otherwise—to punish your child, ever. Should you have said something then and there? Sure. And for your friend's part, even if she didn't *mean* to do it, ideally she would have said so after the fact.

It's not too late to draw a line in the sandbox, though—otherwise it could happen again. Call her after the kids are in bed and tell her how you feel. Don't mince words: Say that in the future, if something comes up, you'll be more than happy to redirect your daughter, but slapping her hand isn't a discipline method you use. I doubt your pal meant to upset you and will probably feel awful; sadly, as awkward as the conversation may be, it won't be the last time you'll need to summon mama-bear protectiveness to defend your child.

fight or fold?

I'm pregnant, and my mom doesn't want to be called Grandma—she wants our son to use her first name instead. It's annoying, and I'm skeptical about how into the baby she'll be.

➔ **Fold.** She's probably feeling nervous about what "Grandma" says about her age, but fret not: A granny by any name (maybe she can try "Mimi" or "Pippy" on for size?) won't be able to resist the power of her grandbaby. Just wait!



ABOUT SABRINA

I live in Orlando, Florida, where I mom, write, and ruin dinner on a regular basis. Send your pressing questions to ifyouaskme@parents.com.



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demoting my kid to middle manager

Our preschooler saw herself as the CEO of our household. My husband and I realized we had to take her down a notch. **by JANCEE DUNN**

IT DAWNED on me recently that our 5-year-old daughter, an only child, considers herself a third partner in our marriage. Sylvie confidently weighs in on all of our family decisions, from where to eat dinner (“How about Chinese this time?” she’ll pipe up from her car seat) to

our next summer vacation spot (“Maine would be fun”).

Worse, she’s picked up my unfortunate habit of making brisk, decisive pronouncements, even when I don’t entirely know what I’m talking about. When my husband, Tom, asked me whether he should fly

or take the train to a business meeting in Washington, D.C., Sylvie, who to my knowledge has never visited the nation’s capital, advised him to fly.

We’ve enabled this behavior partly because it’s nearly impossible to have a private conversation in our small apartment. But if I’m being honest, I must admit that it’s also sort of funny to watch someone who wears light-up shoes give input on all aspects of our life. When the three of us visited an apartment open house a few weeks ago, the realtor was amused by Sylvie’s comments about the closets (“Oooh, you could put a lot of clothes in here”) and kitchen appliances (“A new fridge, very nice”). She’s even become adept at defusing marital squabbles by jumping between us and making us laugh.

But she has acquired way too much power, best illustrated by this scenario: At dinnertime, she drags her chair to the head of the table so she can preside over the meal like a tiny chairman of the board.

It’s time to demote her.

I share this predicament with many parents of only children, a group that’s growing rapidly. A full 20 percent of U.S. families (about 17 million) currently have just one child, according to the latest Census Bureau statistics. Onlies have gained in numbers for a variety of reasons: More women today are immersed in their career and put off having children; families feel squeezed by the economy; and many couples run into fertility issues.

These families of three often evolve into a tight little unit, without much separation between parents and offspring. But separate you must, advises Alan Ravitz, M.D., a child psychiatrist in New York City. He says that freighting a kid with adult responsibility is not a good idea. “I just can’t imagine a single important decision you’d want Sylvie

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to participate in,” he told me. “She doesn’t have good judgment—she has lousy judgment, like all 5-year-olds! Children her age have no capacity for abstract thought whatsoever. They don’t think about things—they just experience them.”

Not only that, but parents’ decisions also often involve delayed gratification (“You can’t have ice cream right now, but maybe as a treat this weekend”) while kids, being kids, will vote on having it now-now-now. “Teaching Sylvie to not get everything she wants is a gift,” says Dr. Ravitz. “Because if she grows up thinking she’s the boss, life’s going to be a constant disappointment.”

This is especially true if she jumps between us during a spat, even a playful one; Dr. Ravitz and numerous experts warn that children have to stay out of it. It’s okay to let a kid know a conflict has been resolved and all is well—try saying something like, “I was upset because Daddy has been working too much lately, but he says he’ll spend more time with us next week.” Children should never be part of the fight; that can lead to all kinds

* Children really do want someone to tell them, “These are the limits.”

of problems, from aggressive behavior to fear and guilt if a kid chooses sides.

So now we keep the bickering between us (if an argument grows more heated, we do our familiar angry pantomime over Sylvie’s head as she watches *Curious George*). And we only ask for her opinion on the mildest possible topics, such as what to have for dessert. Anything beyond that, we tell her firmly, is a Mommy-and-Daddy decision.

It’s a point that needs reinforcing as often as possible, says Lauren Sandler, author of *One and Only* and mother of a singleton. “When my daughter thinks something should go a certain way, I explain that she doesn’t get to make those choices yet,” she says. “My husband and I are clear about that, and it gets articulated on a daily basis.”

And so our daughter was finally ousted from the tribunal. When she

tried to muscle in on a discussion about where she should apply to kindergarten, we told her we knew more about the situation than she did and would handle it. When she attempts to direct our weekend plans (often involving three playdates and cookies at every meal), we tell her we’ll work out a schedule and let her know.

Of course she protested. Of course she craved more authority. But as our two-person rule became the new normal, she adjusted. And maybe that’s what she secretly wanted. “I think it’s scary for children to have too much power,” says Darald Hanusa, Ph.D., a therapist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s School of Social Work. “Children nowadays get exposed to way too much information, anyway. Kids really do want someone to say, ‘These are the limits.’ And children who don’t have boundaries keep pushing the envelope. The sooner you establish boundaries, the sooner they can stop pushing and just put their energy into being kids.”

As for my husband and me, being (an occasional) twosome again has strengthened our marriage more than a few date nights ever could. Now we laugh at the fact that we used to take direction from someone who thinks her stuffed animals are alive. And these days, when Sylvie is allowed to cast a vote she takes her task seriously. The other night when we were at a restaurant, she studied the three choices on the children’s menu with the unblinking concentration of a Talmudic scholar. “This is hard,” she whispered, and Tom and I looked at each other and smiled. Determining whether to go with the bland chicken fingers or the bland pasta with butter or the bland grilled cheese should be the most taxing decision she makes all day. Soon enough, she’ll be faced with bigger, more complicated choices. For now, we’ll keep it simple. ✕



Looking for a different route to migraine relief?



IT'S IN THE DELIVERY

Coming soon:

a non-pill treatment for migraine
with or without aura in adults

Your route to
more information is
zecuity.com



zecuity
(sumatriptan iontophoretic
transdermal system)
6.5 mg / 4 hours

ZECUITY is a prescription medicine used for the acute treatment of migraine headaches with or without aura in adults. ZECUITY is used for people who have been told by a healthcare provider that they have migraine headaches. ZECUITY is not used to prevent or decrease the number of migraine headaches you have.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

ZECUITY can cause serious side effects, including heart attack and other heart problems, which may lead to death. Stop using ZECUITY and get emergency medical help right away if you have symptoms of a heart attack. ZECUITY is not for people with risk factors for heart disease unless a heart exam is done and shows no problem.

Do not use ZECUITY if you have:

- heart problems or a history of heart problems; had a stroke, transient ischemic attacks (TIAs), or problems with your blood circulation; narrowing of blood vessels to your legs, arms, stomach, or kidney
- uncontrolled high blood pressure
- hemiplegic migraines or basilar migraines; taken any triptan, ergot, or ergot-type medicines in the last 24 hours. Ask your doctor if you are not sure.
- severe liver problems; or an allergy to sumatriptan, the medicine in ZECUITY, or any of the components in ZECUITY.

ZECUITY may cause other serious side effects including:

- injury during a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI). ZECUITY contains metal parts and must be removed before an MRI.
- allergic contact dermatitis—a serious skin reaction where ZECUITY is applied.

- changes in color or sensation in your fingers and toes
- stomach and intestinal problems
- problems with blood circulation to your legs and feet
- medication overuse headaches
- serotonin syndrome—a rare but serious problem that can happen in people using ZECUITY, especially when used with anti-depressant medicines called SSRIs or SNRIs.
- increases in blood pressure
- serious allergic reactions. Get medical help right away if you have any of these symptoms: swelling of your face, lips, mouth, or tongue; trouble breathing; wheezing; severe itching; skin rash, redness, or swelling; dizziness or fainting; fast heartbeat or pounding in your chest; or sweating.
- seizures.

The most common side effects of ZECUITY include pain, tingling, itching, warmth, discomfort or a change in the skin color at the application site of ZECUITY.

Only you and your doctor can decide if ZECUITY is right for you.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please read the Important Information for ZECUITY on reverse side.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR

ZECUITY® (zeh-CUE-eh-tee) (sumatriptan iontophoretic transdermal system) for topical use

Read the Patient Information and Instructions for Use that come with ZECUITY before you start using it and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This summary does not take the place of talking with your healthcare provider about your medical condition or your treatment.

What is the most important information I should know about ZECUITY?

ZECUITY can cause serious side effects, including:

Heart attack and other heart problems. Heart problems may lead to death.

Stop using ZECUITY and get emergency medical help right away if you have any of the following symptoms of a heart attack:

- discomfort in the center of your chest that lasts for more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back
- chest pain or chest discomfort that feels like an uncomfortable heavy pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain
- pain or discomfort in your arms, back, neck, jaw, or stomach
- shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort
- breaking out in a cold sweat
- nausea or vomiting
- feeling lightheaded

ZECUITY is not for people with risk factors for heart disease unless a heart exam is done and shows no problem. You have a higher risk for heart disease if you:

- have high blood pressure
- have high cholesterol levels
- smoke
- are overweight
- have diabetes
- have a family history of heart disease
- are a female who has gone through menopause
- are a male over age 40

What is ZECUITY?

ZECUITY is a prescription medicine used for the acute treatment of migraine headaches with or without aura in adults. ZECUITY comes in an iontophoretic transdermal system (TDS) that uses a mild electrical current to deliver the medicine sumatriptan through your skin.

ZECUITY is used for people who have been told by a healthcare provider that they have migraine headaches.

ZECUITY is not used to prevent or decrease the number of migraine headaches you have. It is not known if ZECUITY is safe and effective in children under 18 years of age.

Who should not use ZECUITY?

Do not use ZECUITY if you have:

- heart problems or a history of heart problems
- had a stroke, transient ischemic attacks (TIAs), or problems with your blood circulation
- narrowing of blood vessels to your legs, arms, stomach, or kidney (peripheral vascular disease)
- uncontrolled high blood pressure
- hemiplegic migraines or basilar migraines. If you are not sure if you have these types of migraines, ask your healthcare provider
- taken any of the following medicines in the last 24 hours:
 - almotriptan (AXERT®)
 - eletriptan (RELPAx®)
 - frovatriptan (FROVA®)
 - naratriptan (AMERGE®)
 - rizatriptan (MAXALT®, MAXALT-MLT®)
 - sumatriptan and naproxen (Treximet®)
 - ergotamines (CAFERGOT®, ERGOMAR®, MIGERGOT®)
 - dihydroergotamine (D.H.E. 45®, MIGRANAL®)

Ask your healthcare provider if you are not sure if your medicine is listed above.

- severe liver problems
- an allergy to sumatriptan, the medicine in ZECUITY, or any of the components in ZECUITY TDS.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before using ZECUITY?

Before you use ZECUITY, tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you:

- have high blood pressure
- have high cholesterol
- have diabetes
- smoke
- are overweight
- are a female who has gone through menopause
- have heart problems or family history of heart problems or stroke
- have liver problems
- have had epilepsy or seizures
- are not using effective birth control
- have or have had any side effects caused by the use of electrical devices. Talk to your healthcare provider if you are not sure
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Using ZECUITY with certain other medicines can affect each other, causing serious side effects.

Especially tell your healthcare provider if you take anti-depressant medicines called:

- selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs)
- serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs)
- tricyclic antidepressants (TCAs)
- monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs)

Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for a list of these medicines if you are not sure. Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show your healthcare provider or pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

What should I avoid while using ZECUITY?

- Do not bathe, shower, or swim while wearing ZECUITY.
- ZECUITY can cause dizziness, weakness, or drowsiness. If you have these symptoms, do not drive a car, use machinery, or do anything where you need to be alert.
- You should remove ZECUITY before you have a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) procedure.

What are the possible side effects of ZECUITY?

See “What is the most important information I should know about ZECUITY?”

ZECUITY may cause serious side effects including:

- **injury during a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI).** The ZECUITY TDS contains metal parts and must be removed before an MRI.
- **allergic contact dermatitis (ACD).** Some people have had a serious skin reaction called allergic contact dermatitis (ACD) where ZECUITY is applied. Symptoms of ACD include:
 - itching, redness, or irritation of skin
 - blisters or peeling of your skin
 - blisters that ooze, drain, or crust overYou should stop using ZECUITY and call your healthcare provider if you have any of the symptoms of ACD. If you have or have had ACD while using ZECUITY and need to take sumatriptan by mouth or injection, your first dose of sumatriptan should be given in your healthcare provider's office or in another medical setting.
- **changes in color or sensation in your fingers and toes (Raynaud's syndrome).**
- **stomach and intestinal problems (gastrointestinal and colonic ischemic events).** Symptoms of gastrointestinal and colonic ischemic events include:
 - sudden or severe stomach pain
 - stomach pain after meals
 - weight loss
 - nausea or vomiting
 - constipation or diarrhea
 - bloody diarrhea
 - fever
- **problems with blood circulation to your legs and feet (peripheral vascular ischemia).** Symptoms of peripheral vascular ischemia include:
 - cramping and pain in your legs or hips
 - feeling of heaviness or tightness in your leg muscles
 - burning or aching pain in your feet or toes while resting
 - numbness, tingling, or weakness in your legs
 - cold feeling or color changes in 1 or both legs or feet
- **medication overuse headaches.** Some people who use too many ZECUITY may have worse headaches (medication overuse headache). If your headaches get worse, your healthcare provider may decide to stop your treatment with sumatriptan.
- **serotonin syndrome.** Serotonin syndrome is a rare but serious problem that can happen in people using ZECUITY, especially if ZECUITY is used with anti-depressant medicines called SSRIs or SNRIs. Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for a list of these medicines if you are not sure. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms of serotonin syndrome:
 - mental changes such as seeing things that are not there (hallucinations), agitation, or coma
 - fast heartbeat
 - changes in blood pressure
 - high body temperature
 - tight muscles
 - trouble walking
 - nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- **increases in blood pressure.** You should not use ZECUITY if you have uncontrolled high blood pressure.
- **serious allergic reactions.** Get medical help right away if you have any of these symptoms of a serious allergic reaction:
 - swelling of your face, lips, mouth, or tongue
 - trouble breathing
 - wheezing
 - severe itching
 - skin rash, redness, or swelling
 - dizziness or fainting
 - fast heartbeat or pounding in your chest (tachycardia)
 - sweating
- **seizures.** Seizures have happened in people taking sumatriptan who have never had seizures before. Talk with your healthcare provider about your chance of having seizures while you take ZECUITY.

The most common side effects of ZECUITY include pain, tingling, itching, warmth, discomfort or a change in the skin color at the application site of ZECUITY.

Most people have some skin redness after removal of ZECUITY. This redness will usually go away in 24 hours.

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

These are not all the possible side effects of ZECUITY. For more information, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist.

Call your healthcare provider for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

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ZEC-40062 September 2014





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In 1706, Twinings of London® began with one man's vision to try something new. Today, we still believe in keeping things fresh. That's why our nine Master Blenders travel from mountaintop to riverside to find the finest ingredients to make our teas unique. Delightfully fresh and flavourful, Twinings® Green Teas are filled with delicious new tastes for you to enjoy.

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GET YOUR LIFE IN ORDER



the great cover-up Try this disappearing act to disguise your kid's clutter: Mount a slim curtain rod to the front of a bookcase and hang a curtain to hide messy shelves. Sew or glue fabric pockets to the front for added toy storage.



baby monitors 2.0

In addition to boasting night vision, two-way talk, and HD video, these hi-tech systems, which stream live to your smartphone, do more than just keep an eye on your baby.

1 The **Dropcam Pro** has an 8x zoom and works with other Nest devices that you might have. For example, if the Nest smoke alarm detects smoke, the Dropcam app will notify you—even if it has been set to Sleep mode—and record footage that might help to determine the source of a fire. \$199; nest.com

2 View the entire room with the **iBaby Monitor M6**. It can rotate 360 degrees and play songs for your little one from your phone's music library. \$200; apple.com **3** Upload your baby's cutest clips to YouTube from the **Samsung SmartCam HD Pro** for instant sharing with family and friends. \$190; samsung.com



1



2



3

stick'em up Hang the **Puj PhillUp cup** just about anywhere, like on your fridge or the bathroom mirror, so your child can help herself to a glass of water. \$10 for one, \$18 for a two-pack; puj.com



save money on dry-cleaning

About 90 percent of items labeled “dry-clean only” are actually washable, say Gwen Whiting and Lindsey Boyd, cofounders of The Laundress, an eco-friendly line of fabric-care products. Steal their secrets for handling delicates at home.

➔ **Defer to the fabric content before the care label.** Clothing labels are not regulated by any authority, so it's often safest for the manufacturer to recommend dry-cleaning—even if the fabric can in fact be washed.

➔ **Many fabrics that are labeled “dry-clean only,”** including wool, cashmere, silk, rayon, and linen, can be washed by hand in cold water, which is the safest and most gentle way to launder. Washing in cold water using your machine's delicate or woolens cycle, with items turned inside out and protected in a mesh bag, is the next-best option.

➔ **Use a fabric-specific wash or detergent** and avoid chlorine bleach. If you must bleach, opt for an oxygenated bleaching system instead, since it's safer for fabrics.

➔ **Ditch the dryer.** In addition to shrinking, it can dull color, weaken fibers, and cause a garment to lose its shape. Hang or lay flat to dry instead.

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theorizing
where babies
come
from,

and a memory foam
mattress so you
can sleep like one

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5 easy meals

Supper is solved! With only one grocery trip and a bit of prep, your weeknights will now go a lot more smoothly. **by JENNA HELWIG**

➔ MONDAY

Scallop Pasta

Active Time **20 minutes**

Total Time **25 minutes**

Makes **4 servings**

INGREDIENTS

- ½ tsp. salt, divided, plus more for the pasta
- 8 oz. dried angel-hair pasta
- ⅓ cup weekend-prepped pesto
- 1 lb. fresh sea scallops
- Freshly ground pepper
- 1 Tbs. olive oil
- 1 lemon, cut into wedges

MAKE IT

1. In a large pot cook the pasta according to package directions in

lightly salted water. Reserve ½ cup of cooking water and drain the pasta. Return the pasta to the pot, and toss with the reserved cooking water, pesto, and ¼ tsp salt.

2. Season the scallops with ¼ tsp. salt and with pepper to taste. In a large nonstick skillet heat the oil over medium-high heat. Cook the scallops until golden brown on both sides, about 6 minutes total. Serve over the pasta with the lemon wedges.

NUTRITION PER SERVING 429 calories; 28g protein; 14g fat (2g sat. fat); 47g carbs; 2g fiber; 2g sugar; 2mg iron; 69mg calcium; 576mg sodium



grocery list

- 1 oz. walnuts
- 1 lb. dried chickpeas
- 6 oz. quick-cooking polenta
- 8 oz. angel-hair pasta
- 1 14-oz. can diced tomatoes
- 1 bunch red grapes
- 2 lemons
- 1 bunch Tuscan kale
- 2 5-oz. packs baby arugula
- 1 lb. cooked and peeled beets
- Fresh rosemary
- 1 head garlic
- 2 oz. grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 oz. goat cheese
- 1 egg
- 8 slider buns
- 12 oz. ground lamb
- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- ¼ lb. thickly sliced lower-sodium ham
- 1 lb. chicken drumsticks
- 1 lb. fresh sea scallops

Pantry items Olive oil, salt and pepper, ground cumin, panko breadcrumbs, unsalted butter, balsamic vinegar

weekend prep

1. Cook 1 bunch Tuscan kale, ribs removed, in boiling water for 30 seconds. Drain well. In a food processor combine the kale, ½ cup olive oil, ¼ cup grated Parmesan, ¼ cup walnuts, 1 clove garlic, and ¼ tsp. salt. Process until smooth. Refrigerate.
2. In a slow cooker combine 8 cups water, 1 lb. dried chickpeas, and 1 tsp. salt. Cook for 5 to 6 hours on high heat or until tender. Refrigerate in cooking liquid.

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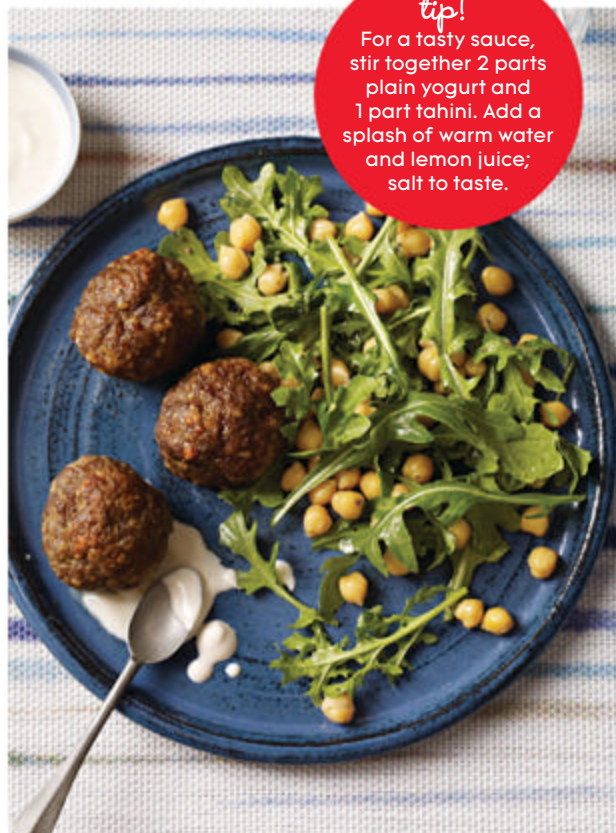
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Add Johnsonville sausage to any dish, and your family will smile to the last bite. Made with only premium cuts of meat and never any fillers, each link adds 7 grams of protein to a meal. Johnsonville sausage can turn any recipe into a new family favorite.

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tip!

For a tasty sauce, stir together 2 parts plain yogurt and 1 part tahini. Add a splash of warm water and lemon juice; salt to taste.



➔ **TUESDAY**

Middle Eastern Meatballs

Active Time **20 minutes**

Total Time **40 minutes**

Makes **4 servings**

INGREDIENTS

- 3 tsp. olive oil, divided**
- 12 oz. ground lamb**
- 1 egg, beaten**
- ¼ cup panko breadcrumbs**
- 1 tsp. ground cumin**
- ½ tsp. salt, divided**
- 2 cups weekend-prepped chickpeas, drained**
- 4 cups baby arugula**
- 2 Tbs. lemon juice**
- Freshly ground pepper**

MAKE IT

1. Preheat oven to 450°F. Brush a 2-qt. baking dish with 1 tsp. olive oil. In a medium bowl combine lamb, egg, panko, cumin, and ¼ tsp. salt. Form into 12 meatballs and place in the baking dish. Bake for 20 minutes or until meatballs reach

an internal temperature of 160°F.

2. Add the chickpeas to a large bowl with the arugula, lemon juice, 2 tsp. olive oil, ¼ tsp. salt, and freshly ground pepper to taste. Toss to coat. Serve with the meatballs.

NUTRITION PER SERVING 366 calories; 24g protein; 19g fat (7g sat. fat); 25g carbs; 6g fiber; 4g sugar; 4mg iron; 91mg calcium; 567mg sodium

➔ **WEDNESDAY**

Drumsticks With Roasted Grapes

Active Time **30 minutes**

Total Time **35 minutes**

Makes **4 servings**

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb. chicken drumsticks**
- 3 tsp. olive oil, divided**
- 1½ tsp. chopped rosemary**
- ¾ tsp. salt, divided, plus a pinch**
- Freshly ground pepper**
- 1 cup red grapes**
- 1 cup quick-cooking polenta**

2 tsp. unsalted butter

1 Tbs. grated Parmesan cheese

MAKE IT

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a baking sheet with foil. Toss the chicken with 2 tsp. olive oil, the rosemary, ¼ tsp. salt, and pepper to taste. Place on the prepared baking sheet. Roast chicken for 10 minutes. Toss the grapes with a pinch of salt and 1 tsp. olive oil. Add the grapes to the baking sheet. Roast 25 minutes more.

2. In a medium saucepan, bring 4 cups of water and ½ tsp. salt to a boil. Add the polenta in a thin stream, and whisk until smooth. Cook for 5 minutes over low heat. Stir in the butter, sprinkle with Parmesan, and serve with the chicken, grapes, and pan juices.

NUTRITION PER SERVING 502 calories; 20g protein; 19g fat (5g sat. fat); 61g carbs; 7g fiber; 6g sugar; 1mg iron; 41mg calcium; 549mg sodium

HITS THAT SPOT



*Roasted Potato Fries
and Avocado Aioli*



These roasted potatoes with avocado aioli sauce rock my world. And they are absolutely going to blow your mind too. Pinkie promise. I mean, really, who doesn't like fries?

YUM

Fingerling potatoes have a silky smooth taste that's perfect, but just about any kind will do. Just imagine them - warm and crispy on your table. Better yet, imagine them in your mouth. Better than that? Stop imagining and just make them already.

- Gaby, What's Gaby Cooking

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➔ THURSDAY

Ham and Beans

Active Time **10 minutes**

Total Time **15 minutes**

Makes **4 servings**

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tbs. olive oil
- 1 tsp. chopped rosemary
- 3 cups weekend-prepped chickpeas in cooking liquid
- 1 14-oz. can diced tomatoes, drained
- ¼ tsp. salt
- Freshly ground pepper
- ¼ lb. thickly sliced lower-sodium ham, chopped
- 4 cups baby arugula
- ¼ cup weekend-prepped pesto

MAKE IT

1. In a large skillet heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the rosemary and cook for 30 seconds. Add the chickpeas, tomatoes, salt, and pepper to taste. Simmer for 10

minutes. Add the ham and arugula and cook until arugula is wilted. Serve with the kale pesto.

NUTRITION PER SERVING 330 calories; 16g protein; 14g fat (2g sat. fat); 36g carbs; 10g fiber; 9g sugar; 4mg iron; 146mg calcium; 630mg sodium

➔ FRIDAY

Mini Beef Burgers

Active Time **25 minutes**

Total Time **30 minutes**

Makes **4 servings**

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- ¼ tsp. plus 1 pinch salt
- Freshly ground pepper
- 3 tsp. olive oil, divided
- 8 slider buns, split and toasted
- 1 cup baby arugula
- 1 lb. cooked and peeled beets, cut into wedges
- 1 Tbs. balsamic vinegar
- 2 Tbs. crumbled goat cheese

MAKE IT

1. In a large bowl combine the beef, ¼ tsp. salt, and pepper to taste. Shape beef into 8 patties. Heat a grill pan over medium-high heat. Grease with 1 tsp. olive oil. Cook patties 3 to 4 minutes per side or until done (160°F). Place patties on slider buns and top with arugula.
2. In a medium bowl, combine the beets, balsamic vinegar, 2 tsp. olive oil, a pinch of salt and pepper to taste. Top with goat cheese and serve with the sliders.

NUTRITION PER SERVING 475 calories; 32g protein; 20g fat (7g sat. fat); 41g carbs; 4g fiber; 12g sugar; 6mg iron; 163mg calcium; 627mg sodium

tip!

If you don't have a grill pan, simply cook the sliders in a frying pan or under the broiler.

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*Per 3.5 oz portion. Contains 200mg of ALA per 56g serving, which is 15% of the daily value for ALA (1.3g).

new
column!

"We dumped our debt!"

Behind in your payments? You're not alone. The average American household carries \$91,000 in debt, which includes mortgages, credit cards, and student loans. But it is possible to dig your way out. See how these three families did it, and get inspired by their money-saving strategies.

by **TERI CETTINA**



"We stopped using our credit cards altogether."

Roni and Stephen Issa
McKinney, Texas
Son: Bakari, 9

DEBT ELIMINATED: \$87,200

➔ The Issas buried themselves in debt so gradually that they barely noticed it happening. With a combined six-figure income (she's a project manager for a heating-and-cooling company; he's a high-school recovery coordinator), they had no trouble making loan payments. However, the couple routinely overdrew their checking account and racked up \$23,900 in credit-card charges, thanks to a penchant for shopping and vacations. Their other obligations included car loans totaling \$27,900, student loans of \$33,700, and a \$1,700 line of credit.

Their wake-up call came during the recession, when Roni's company imposed an across-the-board salary reduction. Money fights ensued: Maybe he should earn more; maybe she should spend less. Ultimately the couple signed up for Financial Peace University, a faith-based debt-reduction course. During the class, the Issas learned to create a monthly budget (their first) and

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pare back their lifestyle. They cut up their credit cards and began withdrawing predetermined amounts for groceries, gas, and more. “My grandmother put cash into envelopes every month to cover different expenses, so the strategy made sense to me,” says Stephen.

With their spending under control, the Issas began attacking their debt, focusing on the smallest balances first. Within 26 months, they were debt-free except for their mortgage. Today, they have a six-month emergency fund, are saving for retirement and college, and are on track to pay off their home in four years.

The Issas believe that using hard currency is what solved their money problems. “When we go out with friends, everyone else pulls out credit cards, but we use cash,” says Stephen. Being debt-free has made them better money role models for their son. Last year Bakari saved up all summer to buy a \$40 toy he desperately wanted. Once at the store, he chose to buy two less-expensive items that seemed like a better value. “With that attitude, I hope that he’ll never have to go through what we did,” says Roni.

debt-defying tips

● HOLD BUDGET MEETINGS.

The couple schedules one 20-minute get-together to plan their spending for each month.

● GET COMFORTABLE SAYING, “THAT’S NOT IN OUR BUDGET.”

The Issas let free-spending friends know they were on a mission to pay off debt, heading off invitations to join in expensive outings.

● BE PREPARED.

Before they began paying down their debt, the Issas squirreled away \$1,000 in an emergency fund. Its purpose: to prevent them from turning to credit again in a pinch.



“We charted our way out of trouble.”

Hillary and Brent Reynolds
Juneau, Alaska
Kids: Lilli, 11; Nathaniel, 11;
Brenna, 8; Garrett, 2

DEBT ELIMINATED: \$54,000

➔ The Reynoldses had tried several times to reduce their debt, first by consulting a credit-counseling agency and later by consolidating loans. It never worked, mainly because they never changed their spending habits. One complicating factor: Brent was stationed away from home in the U.S. Coast Guard, which led to Hillary’s taking a number of expensive flights with their infant twins to her parents’ home in southern Alaska for caregiving help and support. Money became so tight that Brent would pull into harbor after months at sea and discover that he could barely withdraw \$20 from an ATM. “We were riding it so close,” recalls Hillary. Their debt included \$32,000

debt-defying tips

● HINT ABOUT GIFTS.

When grandparents asked about birthday and holiday presents, the Reynoldses suggested they pay for the kids’ dance lessons or buy them necessities like winter coats. This enabled them to allocate additional money toward reducing their debt.

● CUT THE CORD.

The Reynoldses got rid of cable and don’t miss it. Their kids watch their favorite shows using less-expensive options such as Netflix and Amazon Prime Instant Video.

● COOK AHEAD.

Prepping and freezing quick-dinner options, like meat loaf and spaghetti sauce, prevent them from being tempted to order takeout on busy nights.

● EARMARK WINDFALLS.

For debt payments, the couple used tax refunds and the annual dividend Alaska residents receive as their share from the state’s oil revenue.

in credit cards, a \$16,000 auto loan, and \$6,000 in student loans.

Their money goal was twofold: to get out of debt and to allow Brent (as he approached 20 years in the service) to open his own business. “I wanted the freedom to choose whether or not to leave the military rather than having our debts dictate the decision,” he says. They also wanted Hillary to continue staying home with their kids, one of whom has special needs.

The couple approached their debt by adopting ideas from financial

16

years, 3 months The time it would take to pay off a \$2,300 credit-card balance by making the minimum payment. If you double it, you can get rid of the debt in two years.

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*Hillary learned to can vegetables and fruit, while Brent figured out how to fix things by watching YouTube videos.

expert Dave Ramsey, author of *The Total Money Makeover*. Their favorite strategy was making a color-coded debt chart that displayed their shrinking loan amounts. "It became this huge accountability tool," says Hillary. "I saw it above my computer every time I paid bills or shopped online."

To free up funds, Hillary became a master shopper. "My hourly 'wage' was based on how much I could save rather than earn," she says. She whittled the family grocery bill down to \$300 a month (a reduction of \$200) by stockpiling sale items and planning menus to align with what she already had in the pantry. She learned to can vegetables and fruit, while Brent figured out how to fix things—from their toaster to his truck—by watching YouTube videos. Eventually, the Reynolds managed to set aside \$2,000 per month, nearly half of Brent's take-home pay, toward debt reduction.

When the family paid off their final debt (a student loan) three years later, they celebrated by taking the kids to dinner and a movie. "You would have thought they went to Disneyland, they were so excited," says Hillary. The Reynolds children have gleaned a valuable lesson from their parents' experience with debt. "They know there's no such thing as free money," says Hillary. Brent, meanwhile, was able to retire from the U.S. Coast Guard and opened his own successful marine-electronics business last year.



"We started living frugally."

Cristin and Patrick Frank
Buffalo, New York
Sons: Pad, 11; Luke, 9

DEBT ELIMINATED: \$250,000

➔ The Franks fell into debt the way many families do. When Cristin became pregnant shortly after their wedding, the couple took on a \$160,000 mortgage for their first home, borrowed \$35,000 to buy a new car, and splurged on baby gear. That was on top of the \$55,000 they owed in college loans. By the time their first child was born, "We felt buried," Cristin recalls.

Their game plan: pay off the car loan early and continue to reduce their student loans, all on Patrick's income as a computer sales rep (Cristin was home at the time with Pad, who was then a baby). They made small spending shifts, dropping their landline, sharing one cell phone, skipping restaurant meals (they eat out only a few times a year), and getting by with one car. Cristin began walking or biking everywhere with her two sons. "We didn't do anything drastic. We made one choice at a time about what we could live without," she says. When Cristin later took a work-at-home project-management position,

the couple decided to earmark her salary toward their mortgage.

Their frugal lifestyle paid off. The Franks retired their student loans within two years, satisfied their car loan two years early, and after six and a half years (with a fluctuating income of \$80,000 to \$120,000) had paid off the house. In keeping with their pragmatic style, they didn't bother celebrating that milestone. Still, erasing their final obligation did enable Cristin to quit her job; start *Eve of Reduction*, a blog about reducing debt, waste, and clutter; and write two books.

The Franks don't view their still-thrifty existence as lacking. For fun, they take family bike rides, hike in nearby parks, and go sledding. "We still spend money, just less," says Patrick. Their boys have adopted their parents' simple values. When a friend of Pad's commented about the Franks' small house, he replied, "This home is perfect for us. We don't need anything bigger." The topic never came up again. "Pad and Luke are comfortable with how we live, and so are we," Cristin says.

debt-defying tips

● **GET CREATIVE ABOUT DIY-ING.**

Instead of paying for kids' swimming lessons, the Franks bought a family pass to a university pool and taught the boys themselves.

● **CONSIDER TRYING TO LIVE WITH ONLY ONE CAR.**

This approach works best if one parent is at home and you live close to school and shopping or you have good public-transportation options or can carpool to work.

● **DON'T JOIN EXPENSIVE SPORTS LEAGUES.**

The Franks chose family sports instead of travel teams for their boys (the gas bills and road-trip meals add up quickly).

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the experts on dealing with debt

This month is the first in our series of personal-finance stories designed to help young families deal with taxes, budgeting, college savings, and other tricky topics. Our Moms Money Clinic advisors will provide hands-on advice for young families each month. See what they have to say about how to tackle debt.



"Having a tangible goal is important. Point to something your family will be able to afford once you're out of debt that you can't now. Also, don't go it alone. Tap into supportive online communities like ReadyForZero.com. Creating a Facebook page or a blog chronicling your journey will keep you accountable."

—**Farnoosh Torabi**, author of *When She Makes More: 10 Rules for Breadwinning Women* and mom of one



"Paying down debt has to coordinate with the rest of your financial picture. For example, you need to set aside at least one month of net income first. Having a safety net will help you break out of the debt cycle."

—**Stephany Kirkpatrick**, certified financial planner, vice president of financial advice and operations for LearnVest.com



"Families who cut back in extreme ways but can't live that way for the long haul are like crash dieters who lose 20 pounds and then gain it right back. Ask yourself, 'Is this budget something we can see ourselves living with year after year?'"

—**Ellie Kay**, author of *The 60-Minute Money Workout* and mom of seven

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it worked for me!

Our readers share clever fixes for everyday problems.

Mommy
is so
smart!



squirt stopper

During diaper changes, my boys always peed on me. I tried covering them with washcloths and diapers, but nothing worked as well as a breast pad! It covers the area without getting in the way and is super absorbent.

Allison Hawkins; Pueblo, CO



pretty fix

We found a hole in my daughter's sweater, so a friend crocheted a few flowers, sewed one strategically over the hole, and scattered the others around. We saved the cardigan and now she has a new look!

Elizabeth Stall; Bothell, WA

cleaning calendar

The thought of cleaning the entire house used to overwhelm me. Now, I divide cleaning into sections: 20 minutes each day while my toddler naps. Mondays, I clean the kitchen. Tuesdays, I clean one bathroom, and so on. Now it's a breeze!

Sabrina O'Neil; Pacific Grove, CA



mouth guard

Because my son started biting the rail of his crib after he learned to stand, I created a rail cover. I cut a line all the way along a pool noodle and covered it with fabric. It slips right over the edge of the crib!

Krissy Sanders; St. Marks, FL

ready reserve

To avoid last-minute trips to the grocery store, I buy two of everything. When we finish the first, the item goes on the grocery list so I have time to buy more for us.

Kris Hendrick; King of Prussia, PA



easy pour

I couldn't find my funnel to mix some sweet tea. I had an empty 2-liter pop bottle from a previous party, so I cut off the bottom, flipped it over, and voilà!

Sarah Groth, of the blog
In Light of the Truth

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"In every job that must be done, there is an element of fun."
Mary Poppins

PREGNANCY

gender-reveal blues

Your heart was set on having a girl (or a boy), but genetics decided otherwise. It's okay to be disappointed. by DANIELLE BRAFF

RIGHT AROUND your 20-week appointment, people ask: “Are you hoping for a boy or a girl?” You say you simply want a healthy baby, even though you’re secretly wishing for a particular sex. Then the ultrasound reveals the results, and you pretend to be thrilled despite the fact that you’re heartbroken. It’s a feeling that Katherine Asbery, author of *Altered Dreams: Living With Gender Disappointment*, knows well. She had hoped her second child would be a girl but instead she had another boy. Before she got pregnant for the third time, she tried tactics that she found online to help her conceive a girl. She ate yogurt to try to change her pH balance, and she made her husband take hot baths to alter his sperm. When she discovered that she’d be having another boy, she “cried and cried,” she says. “Then I felt guilty.” Like Asbery, many women have sobbed during their big ultrasound, but there are ways to deal with your mixed feelings—and get excited about the sex of the child you’re having.

➔ **Accept any emotions**

The first step toward moving forward is to recognize your disappointment and be honest with yourself, says Stephan Quentzel, M.D., a psychiatrist specializing in pregnancy and childbirth issues at Mount Sinai Beth Israel Medical Center, in New York City. “It can sound ugly to say, ‘I wanted a boy and

not a girl,’ because you’re expected to love the child no matter what,” he says. But it’s normal if you’re not immediately thrilled; soon enough you will be.

Moreover, don’t feel ashamed if your sadness shows. “Many women make sure they dry their eyes, fix their makeup, and plant a smile on their face before they leave the ultrasound room,” says psychiatric nurse Joyce Venis, author of *Postpartum Depression Demystified*. But if you don’t eventually let your emotions show, it’ll be harder to keep your negative thoughts under wraps. “Feelings aren’t good or bad or right or wrong—they’re just feelings,” Venis says. So acknowledge them out loud to yourself and to your partner, and let him do the same. If you’re unable to discuss this with him, consult a therapist or confide in a nonjudgmental friend instead.

➔ **Work through your concerns**

Ask yourself why you feel the way you do. Are you upset because you grew up with brothers and pictured living-room wrestling matches and games of flag football with a son? Did you imagine going shopping and doing crafts with your little girl? Keep in mind that the daughter you’re having might be a rough-and-tumble gal who’s a standout on the field—or perhaps you’ll give birth to a creative, art-loving boy who’s disinterested in sports. What’s more, even if you had

gotten the gender of your choice, your kid still might not grow up to have the interests or personality that you expect based on his or her sex.

Perhaps your letdown stems from doubts that you’ll know how to be a good parent to the child you’re having. “A lot of it is fear—stuff like, ‘I don’t know how to play baseball, so how can I teach my son?’” Venis says. “You don’t have to know, and you don’t have to like playing with Barbie dolls to raise a girl. You will learn what you need to as you go along.” If you’re really worried, make plans with friends or relatives who have kids of that sex, so you can explore the experience that’s ahead of you, Dr. Quentzel suggests. For example, if you’re having a boy, make an effort to spend some one-on-one time with a friend’s son. And ask your sister plenty of questions about how raising her son has been different from raising her daughter. Unsure how to handle the daughter you’re about to have? Invite your niece to spend the weekend at your place.

➔ **Trust your ability to love**

Finally, realize that any discontented, guilty feelings you have now won’t last forever. During pregnancy, all you know about your baby is his or her sex. Once your little bundle arrives, you’ll have the whole package—which includes a personality and quirky traits. “Gender disappointment typically only lasts until your child’s birth day, when you finally meet each other,” says Diane Ross Glazer, Ph.D., a psychotherapist at Providence Tarzana Medical Center, in Tarzana, California. In fact, oxytocin, the powerful hormone that your brain releases during labor, helps you fall in love with your baby. This was certainly true for Asbery. “My children are a blessing to me,” she says. “Each of my boys is different, and each of them brings something fantastic to our family.” ☺



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BABY 0–12 months

first fascinations

The simplest sights and sounds can delight your baby. by TAMEKIA REECE

WHAT do babies like? Being held, hearing your voice, and a nice dose of breast milk or formula obviously top the list. But what about the ceiling fan, pop music, or that zebra-print artwork on the wall? We talked to experts about why certain things are so captivating to babies—and how you can join the fun.

➔ Moving objects

When a baby is born, he can focus only about 8 to 12 inches in front of his face, and his eyes can't move from side to side. However, by 4 months, when his eyes can work together and he can track a moving object from left to right, anything in motion will capture his attention, notes Mary Ann LoFrumento, M.D., medical director of the newborn nursery at Goryeb Children's Hospital, in Morristown, New Jersey. Combined with his improved hand-eye coordination, he'll be able to reach out and explore objects with his hands and mouth. As he continues to grow, he'll learn about cause and effect as he bangs toys together and figures out, for example, "If I push this button, I hear music."

Play along Move a toy slowly up and down and right to left in front of your infant. By 3 months, he'll have no problem following along.

➔ Music

Babies like lullabies but they also dig music meant for us older folks, so don't be surprised if your cutie kicks her legs when she hears a Katy Perry

song. Music can either be soothing or exciting to a baby, especially the rhythm and the repetitiveness of the chorus, says David Saltzman, M.D., a pediatrician at Lake Shore Pediatrics, in Lake Shore, Illinois. It also helps your baby's language skills by introducing her to new words and sounds. Plus, that wiggle she does when she hears her song is a positive sign: "It means her body, ears, and brain are working together to find the rhythm," explains Dr. Saltzman.

Play along Once she can sit up unassisted, give her a toy piano, or a wooden spoon and a pot, so she can make her own tunes. If she babbles, respond in a singsongy voice. There's nothing like a mommy-baby duet!

➔ Contrasting colors

Your baby looks around at everything, but it probably seems that certain colors are of particular interest. A red barrette, a black-and-white blanket, or a polka-dot shirt may hold his attention. While it was once believed that newborns respond only to black-and-white patterns, we now know that they can see colors, says Dr. LoFrumento. For the first few months they are drawn to high-contrast primary colors, such as red and green, and other bold patterns. Their vision improves between 4 and 6 months, when they're able to appreciate pastels and colors of different hues.

Play along Print out patterns such as a bull's-eye, a checkerboard, or circles of various sizes and colors.

Hang them where your baby can see them, and switch images every few days so he doesn't get bored.

➔ Animals

Even if you don't have a pet at home, your baby probably lights up when she sees a dog or a cat. Her outstretched arms and squeals of glee mean she's eager to touch and explore the little furball. Babies are interested in part because animals' faces look similar to a human face, and because of the way they move, says Marsha Gerdes, Ph.D., a child psychologist at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

Play along Read books or buy toys that feature animals. You can also appeal to your baby's animal attraction by crawling on the floor and barking like a dog or mooing like a cow. She'll get some good laughs and may even try to imitate you.

➔ Body parts

Don't freak out if your newborn spends a large chunk of time just staring at his fist. Curiosity about his own body is a part of a baby's natural development. "Besides the initial feeling of wonderment that an infant experiences, the actual mastery of a physical skill, like using his hand to grip a pacifier, can be very rewarding," says Dr. Saltzman. As your baby gains more control of his body, usually by 4 months, he'll touch and examine other areas like his ears, his genitals, and, eventually, his yummy toes. These explorations improve hand-eye coordination and help him discover the power of different parts of his body (when he bats objects with his hand or pumps his legs to kick off his socks, for example).

Play along Give him an early start on body awareness by sitting in front of a mirror, and pointing out the different parts of both your faces. Don't forget the silly expressions! ✕



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TODDLER 1-2 years

setting a schedule

Want your child to stay calm and cooperate? A daily routine is your secret weapon for getting him to go with the flow. **by KATHLEEN REILLY**

LIFE with a toddler can seem like the movie *Groundhog Day*. It's the same schedule again and again, from singing a wake-up song in the morning to giving her a bath and telling her a story before bedtime.

Although the daily routine can feel pretty monotonous to you, it's heavenly for kids this age. Toddlers thrive on having lots of structure to their day. The consistency helps them cope during a period of rapid language, social, and motor development, giving them the self-assurance to explore the world. A predictable routine also helps your toddler feel safe (Mommy goes to work, but she comes back in time to feed me dinner) and teaches them about boundaries (we'll read three books before bed, not four). "It increases her sense of security because she knows what's coming next," says Jean M. Thomas, M.D., clinical professor of psychiatry and behavioral science at The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences, in Washington, D.C. You can help your child establish good patterns and increase her flexibility with these smart scheduling tips.

➔ Map out your day

It's the heart of any routine: Figure out what tasks need to be done, then line them up in the same order every day. Your toddler will love knowing that he eats breakfast at his little table, then gets dressed, and then

helps you feed the cat. "The pattern of repetition helps lay down critical pathways in a young child's brain," explains Dr. Thomas. The more robust those mental links become, the more confident and calm your little one will be, knowing that he can anticipate the next activity in his day. That means he'll be less anxious overall—and less prone to throwing temper tantrums.

➔ Plan ahead

We all have days where we end up rushing around to get everything done at once. But that can wreak havoc on your toddler's need for structure. If you nix her usual morning outdoor activity, she might be cranky until lunchtime. "The meltdown that ensues will inevitably take even longer to deal with than if you'd just stuck to the schedule in the first place," says Marni Axelrad, Ph.D., a child psychologist at Texas Children's Hospital, in Houston.

One smart fix: If you're a night owl, do some prep the night before (or do it in the morning if you're an early riser). Get breakfast pulled together, and pack a snack and everything you need for the child-care center. Still not achieving a steady schedule? "It might be time to adjust your routine to make it fit into your day better," says Dr. Axelrad. It's important to sell the change to your child enthusiastically. You might say,

"Since you're getting to be such a big girl, we're going to start getting dressed before breakfast!"

➔ Encourage flexibility

Although a set schedule is a major comfort for your kid, you don't want to make him so dependent on predictability that he'll fall apart the minute something is different. Now is a perfect time to teach him to become adaptable so he'll be more resilient when he's older. "Alternate the books you read before naptime, or try having a picnic lunch in the living room instead of eating at the kitchen table," suggests Dr. Axelrad. Adding variety will teach your child that even though you're going to a new park for his playdate, he'll still meet up with the same buddies, play on the swings, and have a great time.

It's also wise to vary the adult who's running the show—switch between Mom and Dad, or a relative or a babysitter. "If it always has to be you putting your child to sleep, what's going to happen if you go out of town?" says Dr. Thomas. By having Grandma take your son to story hour or your partner handle bathtime, you'll be letting your kid know that he can count on other adults to meet his needs too.

After a successful shift in routine, such as starting child care, recap the experience to help your child remember. "Talk about how well he did making the change," suggests Beth Ryan, a child-life specialist at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago. "It's that positive reinforcement that encourages flexibility."

➔ Try to minimize major shake-ups

What should you do when there's a family emergency or you're going away for a weekend at your in-laws' house? "Maintaining a sense of

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normalcy is important when things are suddenly very different in your toddler's world," says Dr. Thomas. "She'll need to have some familiar conventions to comfort her."

If you're suddenly dealing with an urgent situation, talk about it with your toddler. Using language she can understand, give her very basic information while reassuring her that everything's going to be fine ("Grandma is sick, and I'm going to go take care of her for a little while. Daddy's going to be reading your bedtime stories tonight"). Keep everything super-simple and calm.

When away from home, try to stick to your regular schedule as much as possible. "Don't skip naptime, and definitely keep the same wake-up and bedtime routines," says Ryan. Also, take along a few familiar objects, like your child's cup and bowl for dinner, and her pillow and a favorite stuffed animal, so mealtime and bedtime will have the same feel and smell as they normally do. While this can help, your toddler may still have some extra meltdowns during your trip. Just keep in mind that by introducing her to a few changes in routine, you'll be establishing the groundwork for teaching her coping skills she'll use later in life. ✕

*** You don't want to make your child so dependent on predictability that he'll fall apart the minute something is different. Teach him to become adaptable so he'll be more resilient when he's older.**

PRESCHOOLER 3-4 years

little negotiators

Kids this age try to broker all sorts of deals. Before you refuse, get some insight into what your child is thinking. **by KRISTYN KUSEK LEWIS**

ONE EVENING a few years ago, our next-door neighbors came over for dessert. When Stella, their then 3-year-old, tiptoed into the living room to sneak another cookie off the platter I'd set out, her mother, who is originally from Brazil, said, "*Folgada*, no!" When I asked what the word meant, she explained that it's a Portuguese term for mooch, or someone who's always angling for a little bit extra.

Folgada quickly became a favorite family expression in our house too. My oldest daughter, also 3 at the time, tested the boundaries on a daily basis, whether it was asking to watch another TV show or coily suggesting that she have just a teeny piece of candy when I'd already said no to dessert. Maddening as it may be, preschoolers love to negotiate, but you can find common ground that makes you both happy.

➔ Discussion tactics

By age 3 or 4, most children have developed the language skills to communicate what's important to them, explains Mary Sheedy Kurcinka, Ed.D., author of *Raising Your Spirited Child*. Negotiating is one way to teach them how to come up with solutions that are acceptable to both of you, but it takes a lot of practice. "My 3-year-old son, Tyler, wants to wear his superhero cape everywhere," says Blake Ellis, a mother of three in Durham, North Carolina. "Before a trip to a local

museum, he decided he was going to take along his play sword and shield too. I said no, but he kept trying to convince me of it, and the whole thing ended with him lying on the ground as if I'd wounded him."

Power struggles like this are an unfortunate consequence of trying to rationalize with your preschooler about rules. "Even though your child is testing how to express himself, he's not necessarily emotionally ready to accept that he can't have everything his heart desires," says Tovah Klein, Ph.D., author of *How Toddlers Thrive* and director of the Barnard College Center for Toddler Development, in New York City.

➔ Reaching an agreement

When you're considering your preschooler's request, think about whether it's something she actually wants or whether there's another motive involved, such as getting more time with you. "When a child asks for 'just one more book' at bedtime, for example, she might not really want to hear another story," says Dr. Klein. "She simply might not want to say good night to you." In that case, you could respond, "We can't read any more books tonight, but I always have kisses for you. Here's one last one and I'll see you in the morning."

Another game-changer: sticking by your word. "If the rules keep changing, parents inadvertently



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✱ Not only is negotiating an indication that he's learning how to express his own ideas, it also shows that he's discovering how to work better with others.

teach their child to push harder trying to figure out where the line is," says Dr. Kurcinka. You can still let your child have a say in determining the rules. "When my son Henry was 4, he was constantly bargaining for screen time, so we made a deal: He receives an allotment of minutes per day decided by me, but he gets to decide how he uses them, whether it's on the iPad or watching a TV show I approve of," says Beth Angle, a mother of two in Campbell, California. "Because he's in charge of how he spends the time, we never debate it anymore."

Finally, don't underestimate the power of empathy. When a child feels heard, she usually calms down, explains Dr. Kurcinka. Case in point: If your preschooler starts haggling with you about buying a box of the brilliantly colored cereal at the grocery store, Dr. Klein suggests commiserating with her rather than simply nixing the idea. Say, "Oh, man! Wouldn't it be awesome if we could eat nothing but cereal?" By having a sense of humor and keeping things lighthearted, you might actually ward off a tantrum, says Dr. Klein.

➔ Looking on the bright side

Your pint-size dealmaker's behavior may be frustrating, but it's actually a positive development. Not only is negotiating an indication that he's learning how to express his own ideas, it also shows that he's discovering how to work with others. In one study from Sweden's University of Gothenburg, the researcher found that playing together is how young children learn to negotiate. Even when the negotiations appear to be a disagreement—say, two girls are playing "family" and both want to be the mommy—it's best for grown-ups to not intervene right away and give the kids time. Typically, they can resolve the conflicts on their own, and this helps them learn to compromise. ✕

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SCHOOL-AGE 5-6 years

good humor

Comedy helps your child overcome tense situations. Join her stand-up routine to keep the jokes flowing. by ANN MUDER

DURING a playdate, I overheard my then 6-year-old daughter, Sydney, and her friend telling each other jokes. They had obviously made up the riddles themselves. (“Why did the chocolate-chip cookie cross the road? To get to the milk! Get it?”) They were each other’s best audience, with every punch line getting a hearty laugh, closely followed by, “Wait! I have another one!”

Your child probably has cracked you up with her funny faces, silly stories, and mismatched outfits for some time now. But recently she’s likely found a different outlet for getting a laugh: using her ever-growing vocabulary to tell jokes to anyone who will play along. “Five- and 6-year-olds love experimenting with what’s funny and what’s not,” explains Janette B. Benson, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at the University of Denver. “Humor is a good way for them to break the ice and form friendships, so it’s definitely worth encouraging in your house.” With these easy expert tips on how to foster her silly side, you’ll be hearing lots more of that adorable giggle.

➔ Joke around

At this age, kids know each riddle has a question, an answer, and a laugh. But they don’t appreciate the wordplay that’s typically involved in punch lines yet—and probably won’t until they’re 7 or 8, explains Paul McGhee, Ph.D., author of *Understanding and Promoting the Development of Children’s Humor*. That’s why you’ll hear him tell jokes like, “Knock, knock! Who’s there? Nobody’s home!” But even if your son’s jokes don’t make sense yet, don’t ignore them. Help advance his humor by chiming in with another version of the joke that has a funnier punch line, such as “Knock, knock! Who’s there? Who. Who. Who? I didn’t know you were an owl.” And watch animated movies or read books that promote wordplay such as *Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type*, by Doreen Cronin, and *E-mergency!* by Ezra Fields-Meyer.



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➔ Laugh it off

Maybe your daughter just spilled a huge glass of juice. Or she's upset about having to get a shot. Often the best way to break the tension is to help her see humor in the situation. A study at Stanford University and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital suggests it can actually help her feel better. Researchers showed video clips to kids as young as 6 and monitored their brain activity. They found that there was a spike in the kids' midbrain, the area that helps process rewarding feelings, as they watched videos they rated as funny, says study author Allan Reiss, M.D. When your daughter knocks over the juice you might say, "Was the table thirsty?" Model funny reactions to bad situations too. For instance, if you trip on the rug, channel your inner actress by saying "Ta-da!" and taking a bow.

➔ Get the sillies

You don't have to add "resident comedian" to the many hats you already wear, but try to find time to do wacky things with your kid: Blow bubbles with straws. Make up nonsense lyrics to your favorite songs. Jump over imaginary elephants. Follow the yellow brick road to bed. It will give him a happier outlook, for sure. But there's another important benefit too: "Families bond over humor," says Dr. Benson. Sharing jokes with your child can create opportunities to communicate and

strengthen your relationship. Tell jokes at dinner or use witticisms over dessert ("I love ice cream." "Well, if you love ice cream so much, why don't you marry it?"). Humor can also be used to open communication and to explore the boundaries of socially appropriate or taboo behavior, explains Dr. Benson. For example, children might tell jokes like, "Want to hear a dirty joke? The pig fell in the mud!" Goofiness, of course, can get out of control sometimes, and it's important to establish boundaries. If your son ventures into hurtful language or becomes too potty-mouthed for your taste, make it clear how he's gone overboard and what he can do instead to be funny and respectful, says Edward Christophersen, Ph.D., clinical child psychologist at Children's Mercy Hospital, in Kansas City, Missouri.

➔ Think big

School-age children love over-the-top statements such as, "I swam underwater for a mile!" or "My cat is as big as your house!" Since exaggeration is a common comedy technique for joke telling, offer hints about how your kid can build on his natural ability, suggests Kelly Swanson, a comedian and mom from High Point, North Carolina. So if your child says something like, "I'm so hungry I could eat a dinosaur!" riff on that and come back with, "I was so hungry that I could have eaten like a dinosaur. But then I'd be extinct!" ✕

* Goofiness, of course, can get out of control sometimes, and it's important to establish boundaries. Make it clear how your child can be funny and respectful.

BIG KID 7+ years

clock wise

Teaching your child about hours and minutes doesn't have to be a chore. Make learning to tell time more fun with these simple steps.

by KAREN CICERO

WHEN Caleb Ravitch, 8, is in the playroom of his home in Hawthorne, California, he runs to the kitchen to see what time it is, despite the fact that there is a big clock on the playroom wall. "Analog clocks frustrate him," says his mom, Lucy. "He'd rather leave the room to look at the digital clock on the microwave."

Most kids after kindergarten don't have trouble with clock basics (like how to tell time on the hour). But, the more complex concepts introduced in first to third grade can be challenging, points out Marilee Abramshe, a third-grade teacher in Congers, New York. And as children have greater access to digital clocks—on an iPod Touch or a tablet, for instance, or even on various household appliances from the microwave to the cable box—their incentive to learn to read an analog clock and the opportunities to practice doing so at home start to diminish.

How can you get your child motivated to master the clock? Spend a few minutes every day getting your kid up to speed on tricky aspects of telling time.



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* When you keep giving your kid reminders about when it's time for her favorite TV show or when it's close to bedtime, you're taking away any reason for her to check the clock herself.

➔ Reading the numerals

What confuses kids the most about telling time on a clock with hands? "It's the fact that the numbers have two separate meanings," explains Amy Sperrazza, a second-grade teacher in New York City. To get her students' attention, she tells them that the numbers on a clock are double agents—and they each have a secret identity. "I'll explain that the secret identity of the number one is five, for instance," says Sperrazza. "And that identity comes out—like when Clark Kent becomes Superman—only when the big hand is on the number." Swipe her idea, and practice the two identities of each number with your child on your clock at home.

Or, make a simple clock that clearly illustrates the double-agent concept: Leslie Buttonow, a mom in Ronkonkoma, New York, made a practice cardboard clock for her 8-year-old daughter, Alexandra, that contains both the real numbers and each of their secret identities. Says Buttonow: "Seeing them alongside each other really made the concept click for her."

➔ Skip-counting

Quickly being able to count by fives makes learning how to read an analog clock much easier, explains Sperrazza. Practice at home, singing along to the "Counting by 5s" song on SchoolTube.com or "Count by 5s: A Math Song by Mr. R" (you can download either one on iTunes for \$1). Point out to your child that when he counts by fives,

every number will end in a zero or a five. Once he can easily skip-count to 60, have him point to the "secret identities" on the clock as he listens to the song.

➔ Elapsed time

Typically in third grade, teachers introduce another potentially tricky clock concept—elapsed time. "Rather than just showing my class two clocks and asking how much time has passed, I give them an assignment to plan their own day," says Abramshe. "They start calculating that they need 30 minutes for lunch and an hour for homework, and so forth, laying the groundwork for what elapsed time means and how they'll be able to use it." Do something similar at home even if your kid isn't learning elapsed time in school yet: "You can start simply by thinking out loud about your day when you have your child in the car," Abramshe suggests. "You might say, 'I have to pick your brother up at karate at 6 and it's a quarter after 5 now, so we have 45 minutes to get dinner.'" Eventually, work your way up to letting your child solve a problem. For instance, you might tell her that a recipe takes about 45 minutes to make. Then you can ask her, "If you wanted to have dinner ready by 6:30, what time would you have to start making it?"

➔ Hands-on help

If you find that your child is still struggling with telling time, consider buying him a watch to

wear and replacing the digital clock in his room with an analog one, suggests Abramshe. (Save the clocks with Roman numerals for when he's a little further along!) For confusion about elapsed time in particular, buy or make a paper clock with movable hands to use for practice (you can check out YouTube or Pinterest for tutorials on making a simple paper-plate clock). Or download the Time Timer app (\$3 on iTunes), which displays time as a colorful disk that gets smaller as time elapses. "My son, now a fifth-grader, used it a lot the last couple of years," says Maria Balice, of Elmhurst, Illinois. "He's a visual learner, and it helped him to be able to set an amount of time (say 30 minutes), see it highlighted in red on the app's clock, and watch it dwindle down as time passed."

➔ Tracking time

Out of habit, you may keep giving your kid reminders when it's time for her favorite TV show, or time to leave for sports practice, or when it's close to bedtime. By doing that, you're taking away any reason for her to check the clock herself. (Oops!) Roy Adams, a dad in Saint George, Utah, allows each of his 9-year-old twins and his 7-year-old daughter to have a 15-minute turn to play video games—and it's up to the children to tell each other when time is up. "I'll ask my youngest, 'What will the clock look like in 15 minutes when it's your turn to play?'" he says. "After a couple months of this, they all became observant clock-watchers and started reminding me when it was time to leave for school or dance class. I still don't get reminders of when it's bedtime, though." ✕

rules

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IT WORKED FOR ME! CONTEST, PAGE 142

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●
"to make the kids do squats in the corner instead of time-outs." —Tiffany Wallace Nottingham

●
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●
"to start scrubbing my nipples with a loofah to build up calluses while I'm still pregnant so it won't hurt when the baby latches on." —Kara Tosiello Alexander

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